

5/14

KEN PATERA LAUNCHES
A JAPANESE UFO

47951



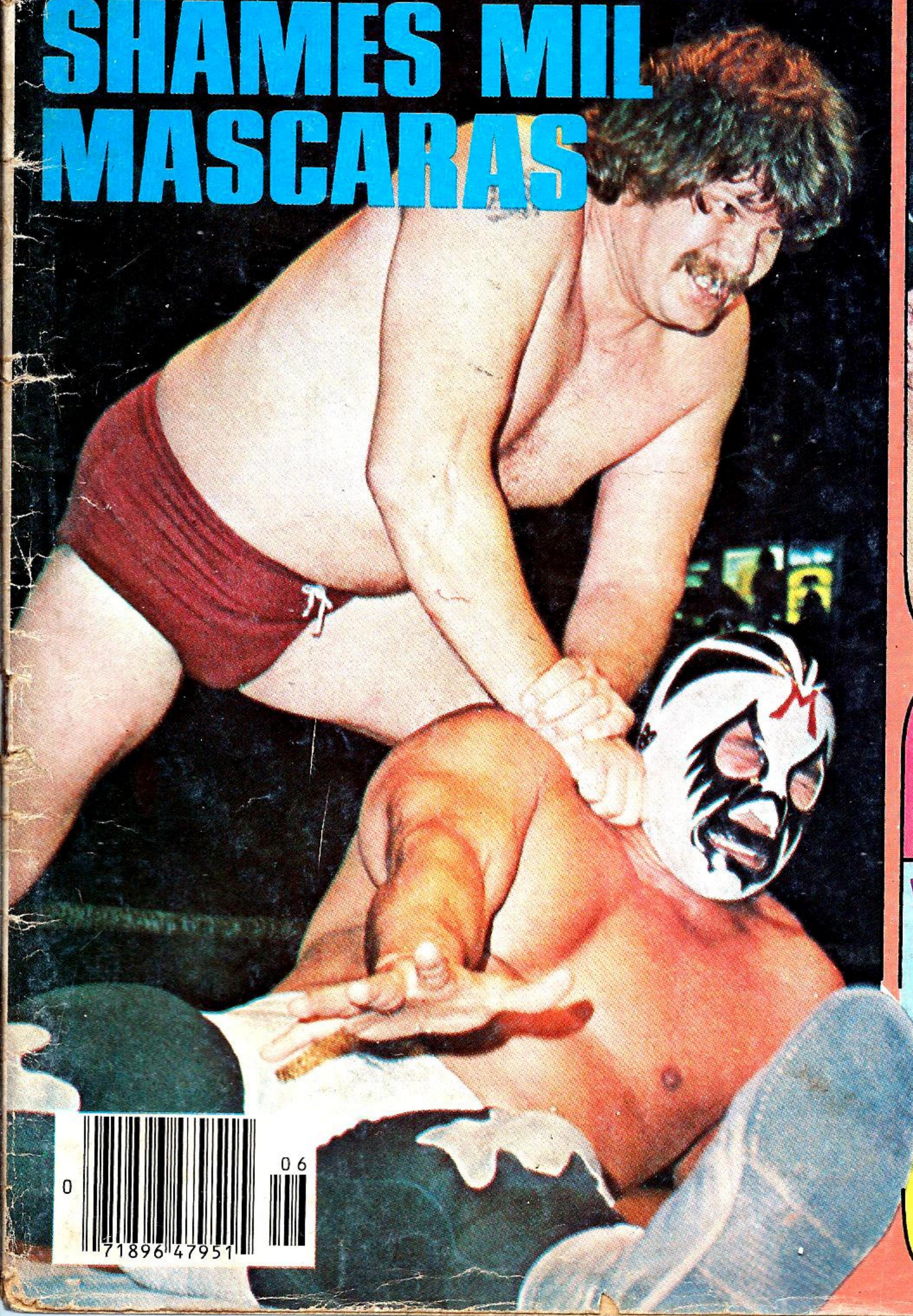
June 1976

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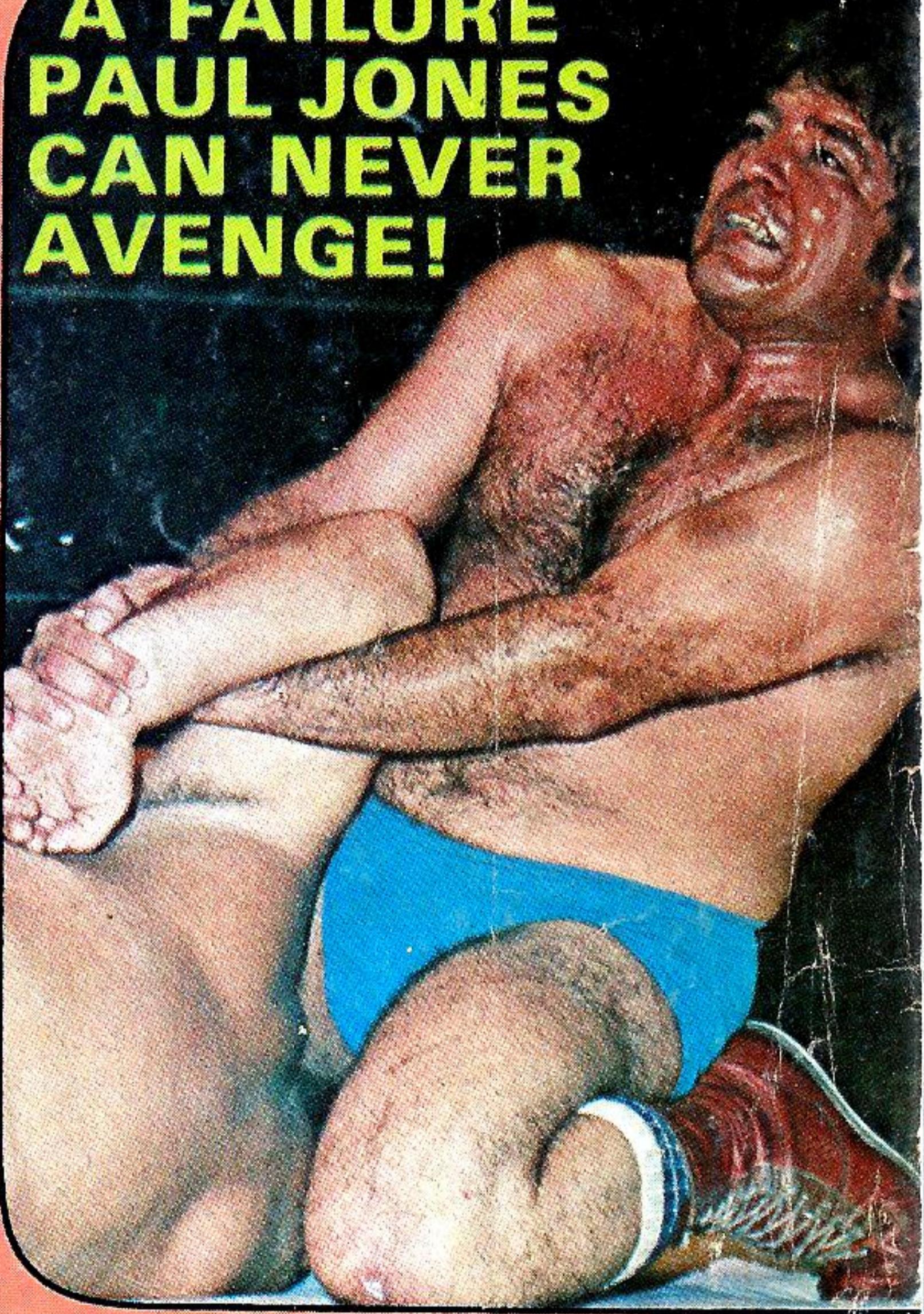
Wrestler

THE

**THE MATCH THAT
SHAMES MIL
MASCARAS**



**A FAILURE
PAUL JONES
CAN NEVER
AVENGE!**



**THE COURT CASE
THAT CAN DESTROY
IVAN PUTSKI**

**WHY JERRY BRISCO
HAD TO
SNEAK-ATTACK
MOONDOG MAYNE**

**BRUISER'S
TOUGHEST
BATTLE**



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OFFICIAL WRESTLING RATINGS

WORLD WIDE WRESTLING FEDERATION

CHAMPION: BRUNO SAMMARTINO
1—SUPERSTAR BILLY GRAHAM
2—IVAN KOLOFF
3—STAN HANSON
4—BOBO BRAZIL
5—IVAN PUTSKI
6—ERNIE LADD
7—BUGSY McGRAW
8—SCANDOR AKBAR
9—LOUIS CYR
10—BILLY WHITE WOLF

AMERICAN WRESTLING ASSOCIATION

CHAMPION: NICK BOCKWINKLE
1—VERNE GAGNE
2—LARRY HENNIG
3—PAMPERO FIRPO
4—JOS LEDUC
5—BARON VON RASCHKE
6—BLACKJACK LANZA
7—OX BAKER
8—BOBBY DUNCUM
9—GREG GAGNE
10—KIM DUK

MOST POPULAR WRESTLERS

1—BRUNO SAMMARTINO
2—IVAN PUTSKI
3—DUSTY RHODES
4—ANDRE THE GIANT
5—MIL MASCARAS
6—MR. WRESTLING II
7—BOBO BRAZIL
8—CHIEF JAY STRONGBOW
9—MARK LEWIN
10—MIGHTY IGOR

NATIONAL WRESTLING ALLIANCE

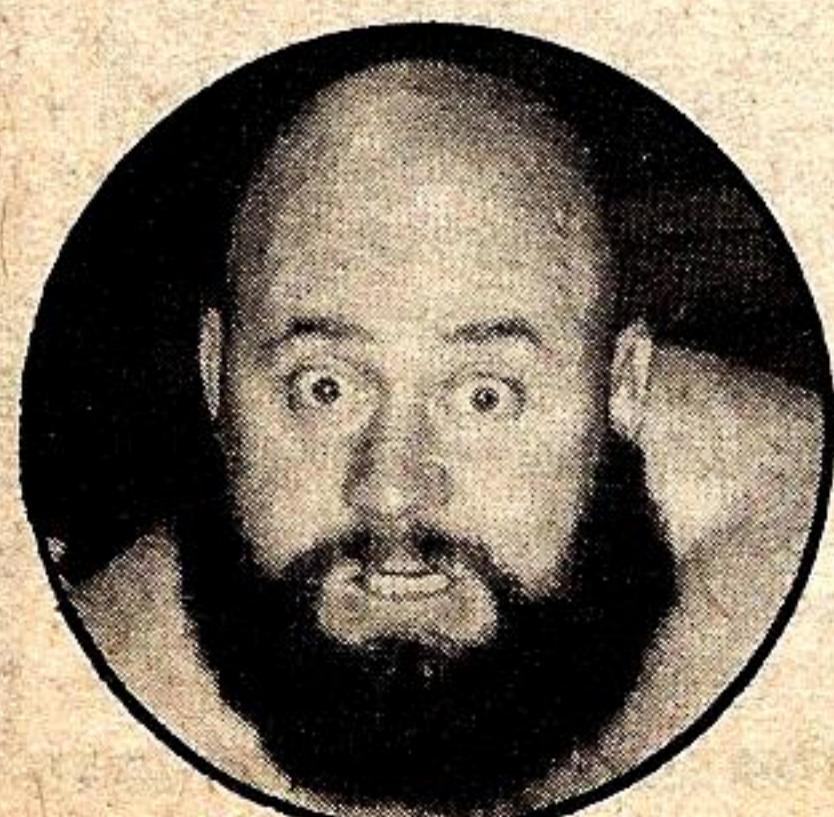
CHAMPION: TERRY FUNK
1—JACK BRISCO
2—DUSTY RHODES
3—BLACKJACK MULLIGAN
4—THE SHEIK
5—FRITZ VON ERICH
6—PAUL JONES
7—BILLY ROBINSON
8—CHAVO GUERRERO
9—DORY FUNK JR.
10—JERRY LAWLER

TAG TEAMS

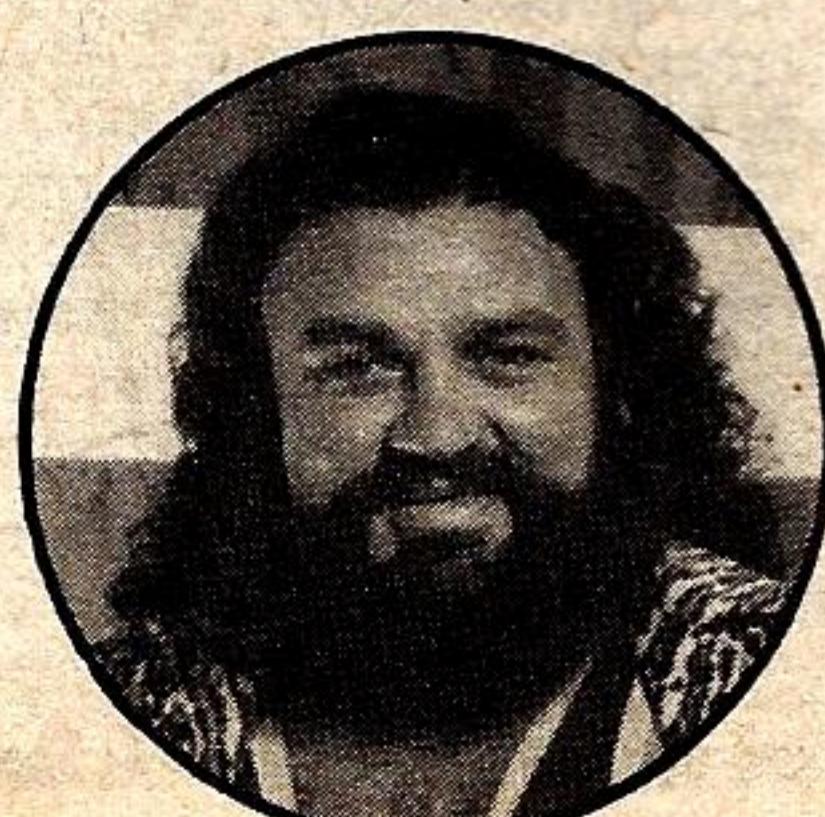
1—THE ANDERSON BROTHERS
2—TONY PARISI & LOUIS CERDAN
3—BRUISER & CRUSHER
4—THE MONGOLS
5—BOB ROOP & BOB ORTON JR.
6—GOLIATH & BLACK GORDMAN
7—PAT PATTERSON & PEDRO MORALES
8—BOBBY DUNCUM & BLACKJACK LANZA
9—THE VALIANT BROTHERS
10—CHRIS COLT & LANNY POFFO

WOMEN

CHAMPION: FABULOUS MOOLAH
1—VICKI WILLIAMS
2—BETTY NICCOLI
3—SUE GREEN
4—SUSAN SEXTON
5—DONNA CHRISTENELLO
6—KITTY ADAMS
7—JOYCE GREEN
8—JEAN ANTONE
9—LEILANA KAI
10—BELLE STARR



BUGSY McGRAW



PAMPERO FIRPO



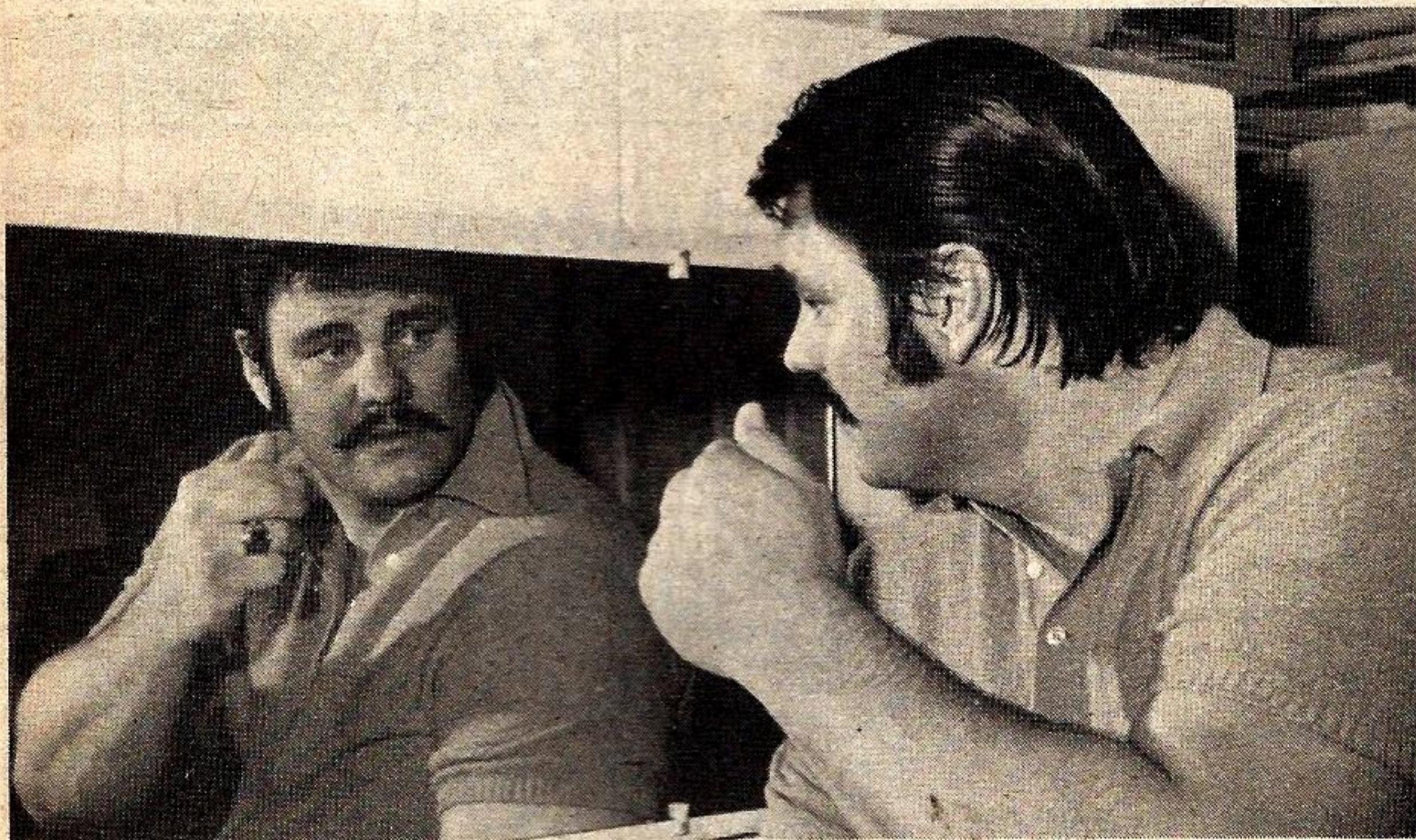
CHAVO GUERRERO



JEAN ANTONE

HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING, BABY!

By Bill Apter



Blackjack Mulligan has earned the right to glory at himself in the mirror—he's seeing the reflection of the new U.S. champion. Another wrestling champion, Antonio Inoki (below left), has signed to take on the heavyweight boxing champion, Muhammad Ali (below right). Who will win this bout, the wrestler or boxing champion?



FINAL NEGOTIATIONS HAVE been worked out, and if all goes as planned, Antonio Inoki will get his chance to engage in a boxer vs. wrestler confrontation against Muhammad Ali. The projected date is June 25, 1976. The battle will take place in Japan.

Meanwhile, Superstar Billy Graham is burning mad at the fact Ali is going

to mix it with the Japanese sensation.

"I made a bid for a mixed match!" exclaims Graham. "I also said I'd box Ali if he wouldn't agree to a mixed bout. But he accepted Inoki's challenge. That's rotten. Here it is—1976—the year of the bicentennial—and Ali is taking this battle to Japan. For the sake of red, white and blue, daddy, he should accept my challenge

and make this confrontation a bicentennial spectacular in the good ol' U.S.!"

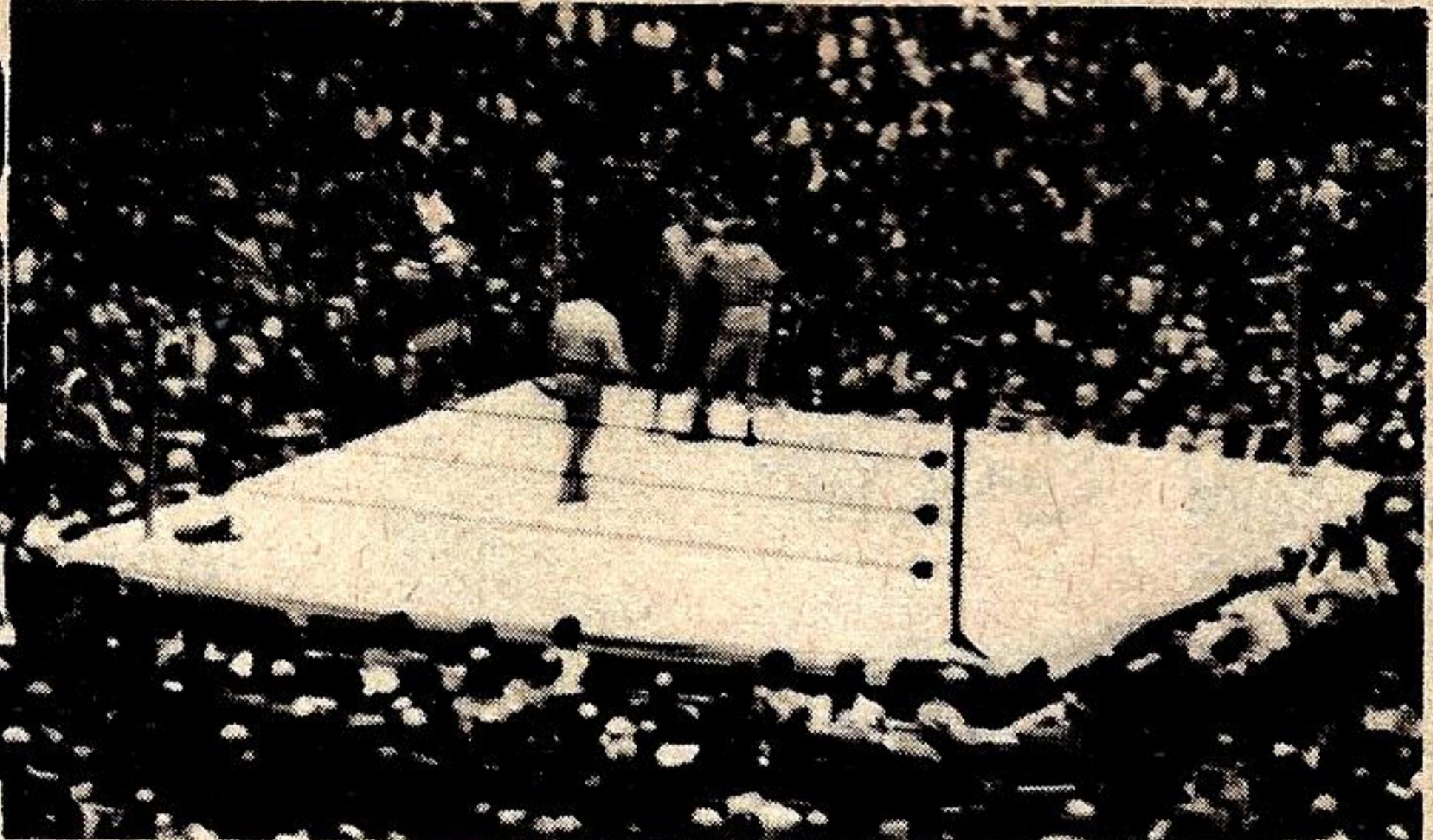
A bit of shocking news—Paul Jones dropped the United States title to Blackjack Mulligan. Mulligan gave Jones such a brutal, illegal beating, the popular Jones had to be carried from the ring. Jones, fully recovered from injuries received in the battle, vows to take the title back and end Mulligan's career.

Dusty Rhodes is making quite a bit of news in the south. First of all, he has a bounty on his head—five thousand dollars worth—put there by Dory Funk Jr. Dory's trying to keep top-ranked Rhodes away from Terry's NWA crown. He's promising the dough to any wrestler who can put big Dust out of commission. So far, a lengthy list of money-hungry scalp hunters have been unable to stop "The American Dream." Terry Funk will have to meet up with Rhodes, a man he has had trouble beating during Dusty's last few title bids. And Dusty also vows "to get Dory Jr. for doing this rotten thing to me."

Rhodes is also engaged in a big feud with "Nature Boy" Ric Flair. The two have had some bloody brawls and it's just a matter of time before one of them puts the other out of commission . . . The Mongols and The Anderson brothers spilling blood all over the Mid-Atlantic areas during their brutal feud . . . Blackjack Lanza teaming with rough Bobby Duncum in AWA tag bouts . . . "Bad Boy" Billy Hines managing Bulldog Brower for the Bulldog's IWA bouts in the Carolinas . . . Ivan Putski and Andre The Giant proving to be the most popular tag team in years . . . Phil Hickerson hospitalized for minor injuries suffered in his most recent battle against Jackie Fargo . . . Jack and

(Continued on page 60)

YOUR LETTERS



BRISCO'S BEST

I don't understand why so many people seem to be blind and not able to see what a great guy Jack Brisco is. He is *not* the cheater Dory Funk Jr. claimed him to be ("Funk and Brisco—For Blood and Glory" [THE WRESTLER/March 1976]).

Don't let all the dumb people bother you Jack. Just prove how good you are by getting that belt back around your beautiful waist.

GET 'EM JACK!"

LAURA CHAVEZ
Jacksonville, Florida

INFINITE WISDOM

I think your three associate editors, Dan Shocket, Randy Gordon, and Michael B. Kape, showed infinite wisdom in choosing Mil Mascaras to beat Bruno Sammartino in the article "The Battle of the Century—Bruno Sammartino vs. Mil Mascaras" (THE WRESTLER/March 1976). I most wholeheartedly agree with them.

As far as I'm concerned, Bruno would not stand a chance against someone as fast as Mil Mascaras. However, the match would still be a tough battle for both men.

PETER KATZ
Brooklyn, New York

ONLY BRUNO

How can anyone think Mil Mascaras could beat a great man like Bruno Sammartino in a match. Of course Bruno would be the victor. There is no man he can't beat, as he has shown time and time again.

That masked Mexican can't hold a candle to the power of Sammartino. Bruno would simply laugh at Mil's flying tactics and proceed to show him who is best.

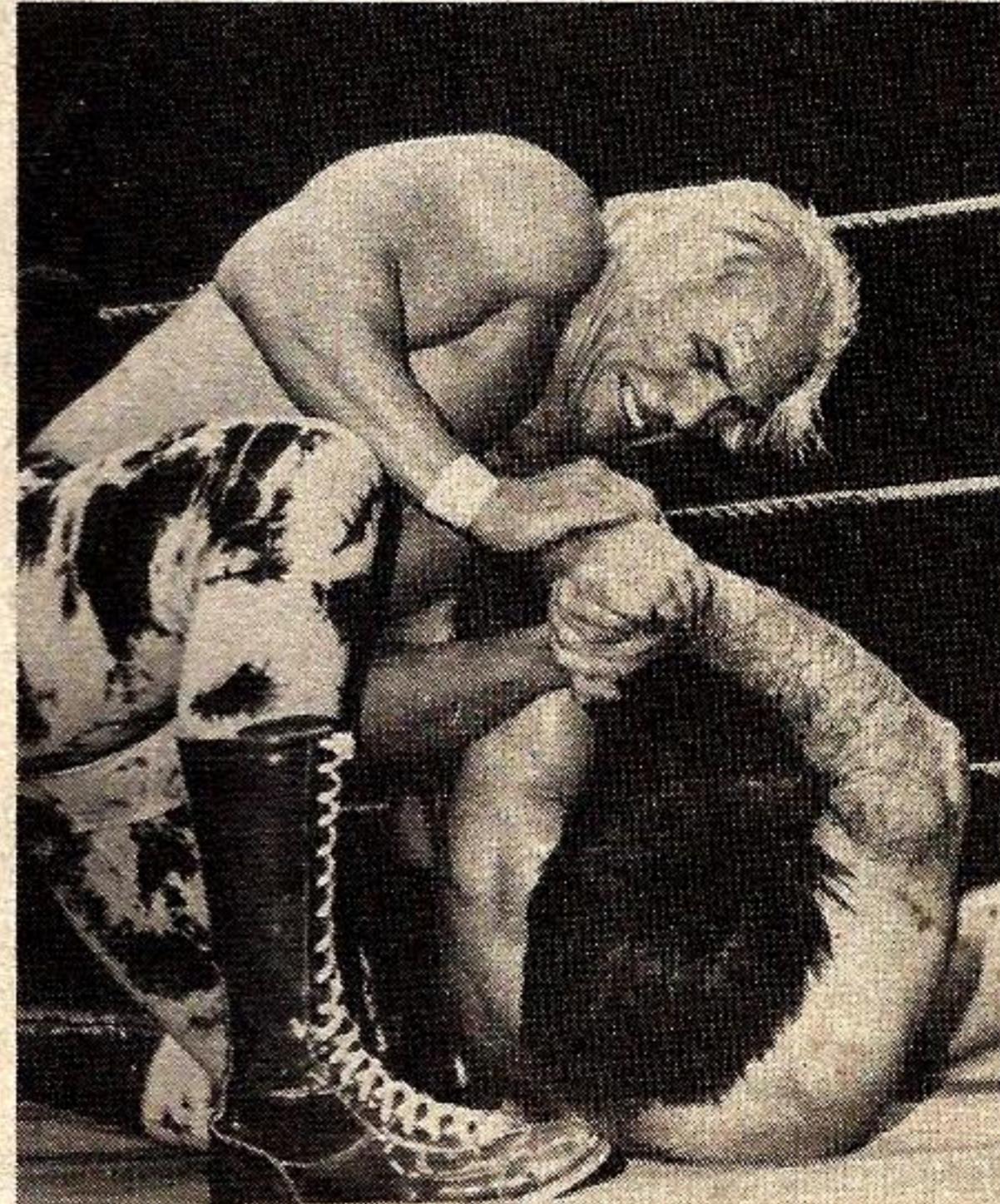
Bruno will always be the best!

J.J. JACKSON
King of Prussia, Pennsylvania



Above: Jack Brisco's fans are sure he'll get back his NWA belt in the next few months.

Below: Bruno Sammartino is in trouble against the powerful, savage Superstar Billy Graham.



BAN BERNARD!

When I read the article, "The Night the Lights Went Out in Georgia—For Chief Jay Strongbow" (THE WRESTLER/April 1976), I was shocked. Brute Bernard should be banned from wrestling. He must not be playing with a full deck if he would hit

someone in the face with a pipe. I also think the referee is nuts for not disqualifying Brute Bernard, but awarding him the match.

When Chief Jay Strongbow's cuts heal, Brute Bernard better watch out!

RAYMOND DAMATO
Bethpage, New York

INJUSTICE

After reading "Before 22,094 Stunned Fans . . . Superstar Graham Destroys Bruno" (THE WRESTLER/April 1976), I have begun to wonder how such a gross injustice could be done to Superstar.

If referee Dick Kroll is as "excellent" as we have been led to believe, why could he not determine whether a count of 10 or 20 seconds should have been given to Bruno? Graham has proven his superior athletic ability each and every time he honors an arena with his Herculean presence. Superstar Graham obviously deserves to possess the WWWF championship belt, and despite scandalous efforts to the contrary, he soon will!

SUSAN RHOADES
Sterling, Virginia

BACK WITH HONOR

Finally, after two-and-one-half years, the NWA world championship is once again owned by somebody worthy of the honor (Terry Funk Brings the NWA Title Belt Back Home" THE WRESTLER/April 1976). Terry Funk is a great wrestler in the class of the immortal Johnny Valentine, and I'm sure he will be as great a champion as his brother Dory was.

In "Your Letters" (THE WRESTLER/March 1976), Terry Donnelly said Terry Funk is jealous of Jack Brisco. Now that Funk has defeated Brisco for the belt, he has no reason to

(Continued on page 51)

CORRESPONDENTS Reports



Fans ask popular Paul Jones for his autograph before the wrestling star attempts to wrest the NWA crown from the head of Terry Funk. Jones failed to become the NWA king, but he gave his many fans an incredibly exciting spectacle and the hope of a title in the very near future. Terry's fans delighted in the successful defense.

CAROLINA CHAOS By Russ Carter

A FINE CROWD of excited wrestling fans filled the Greensboro Coliseum to see two fantastic title matches. No one will ever forget either of these incredible contests!

One person who will never forget the NWA title bout between champion Terry Funk and challenger Paul Jones is Jones himself. He learned some valuable lessons which may help him earn the title in the future.

For the first half of the match, both men wrestled superbly and scientifically. Then, afraid for his title, Funk ignored the rulebook and turned the bout into a street brawl, forsaking wrestling for closed fist punches, kicking and stomping. Paul was stunned by this turn of events. He soon was captured in a double and take-down wristlock. Funk pressed Paul and the referee to see Funk's leg on the bottom rope. He counted Paul out, allowing Terry to retain his title. You can bet Jones will be ready for any Funk dirty tactic in the future!

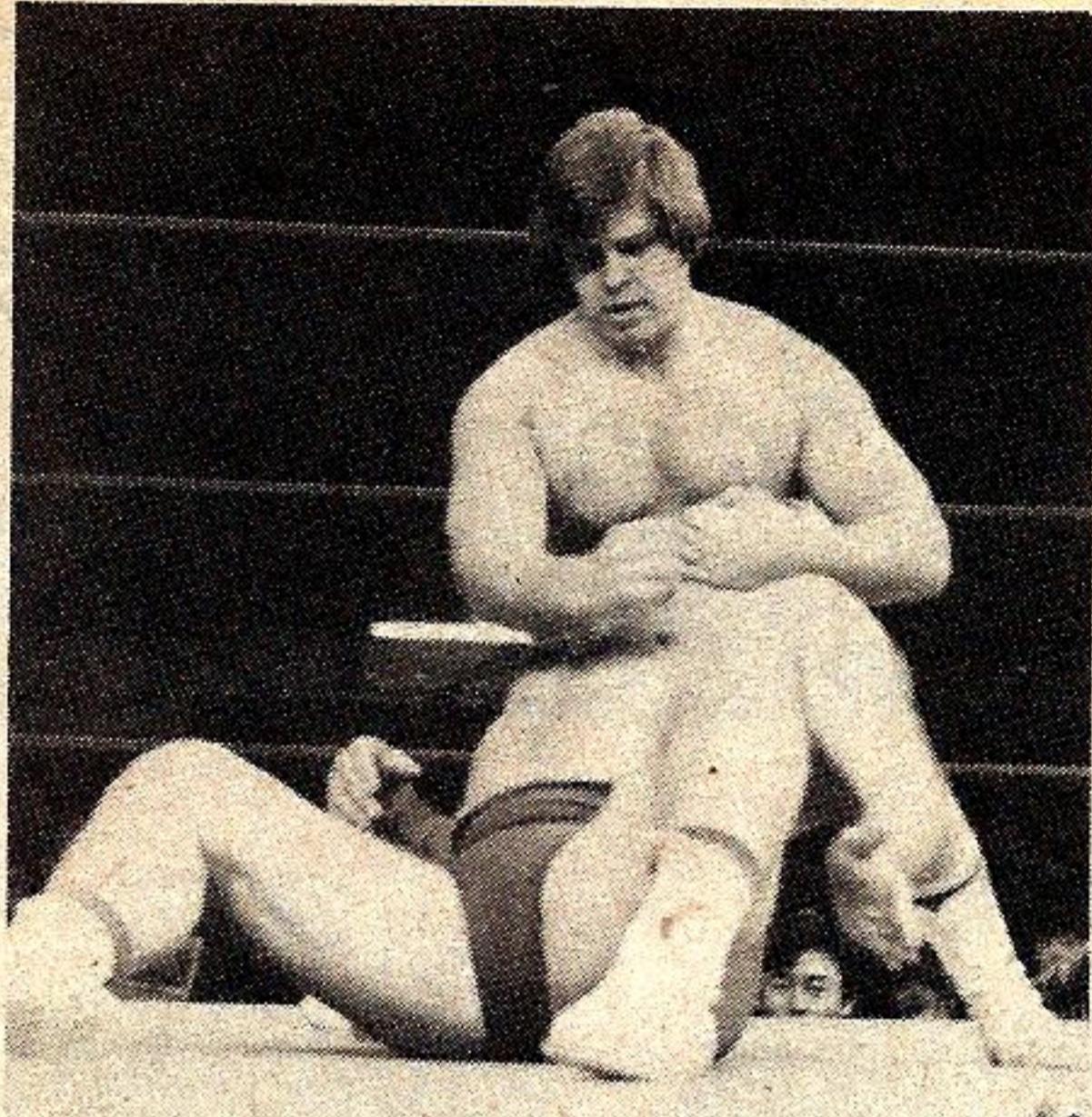
Though Dusty Rhodes failed to win the Mid-Atlantic Championship from Ric Flair, he has the title belt! It was a brutal bout between the pair, ending with Flair's disqualification for using brass knuckles. After the disqualification, Flair was so anxious to leave he fled to the dressing room without taking his belt with him. Dusty grabbed the prize and dared Flair to come back and get it. Ric had no intention of confronting the bloody Rhodes, so Dusty tromped back to the dressing room with the belt and an angry challenge hurled at Flair for a rematch. If Ric wants his belt back, he'd better accept!

KANSAS DISPATCH By Claudey Brown

Three prestigious championships were on the line in Wichita, Kansas, making for an evening of wrestling action no one will ever forget.

Terry Funk came perilously close to losing his NWA title to Ted Oates in a match in which Funk proved he was more interested in winning than wrestling fairly. Terry started out wrestling scientifically but quickly degenerated into brawl tactics when the going got rough.

Even so, Funk barely managed to win two out of three falls. Ted Oates came so close to being the new



Mike George remains as Central States champion as well as a favorite with Japanese fans.

champion, his many fans could almost taste his glory.

Mike George did lose his Central States championship—only to regain it moments later on a reversed decision. Bulldog Bob Brown almost got away with using brass knuckles to capture the title. Fortunately the referee caught him before crime did pay.

As exciting as the controversial ending was a George bodyslam of Brown during one of the more intense moments of the match. Brown hit the canvas so hard, one of the 2x6 boards split and had to be replaced! That's one incredible bodyslam!

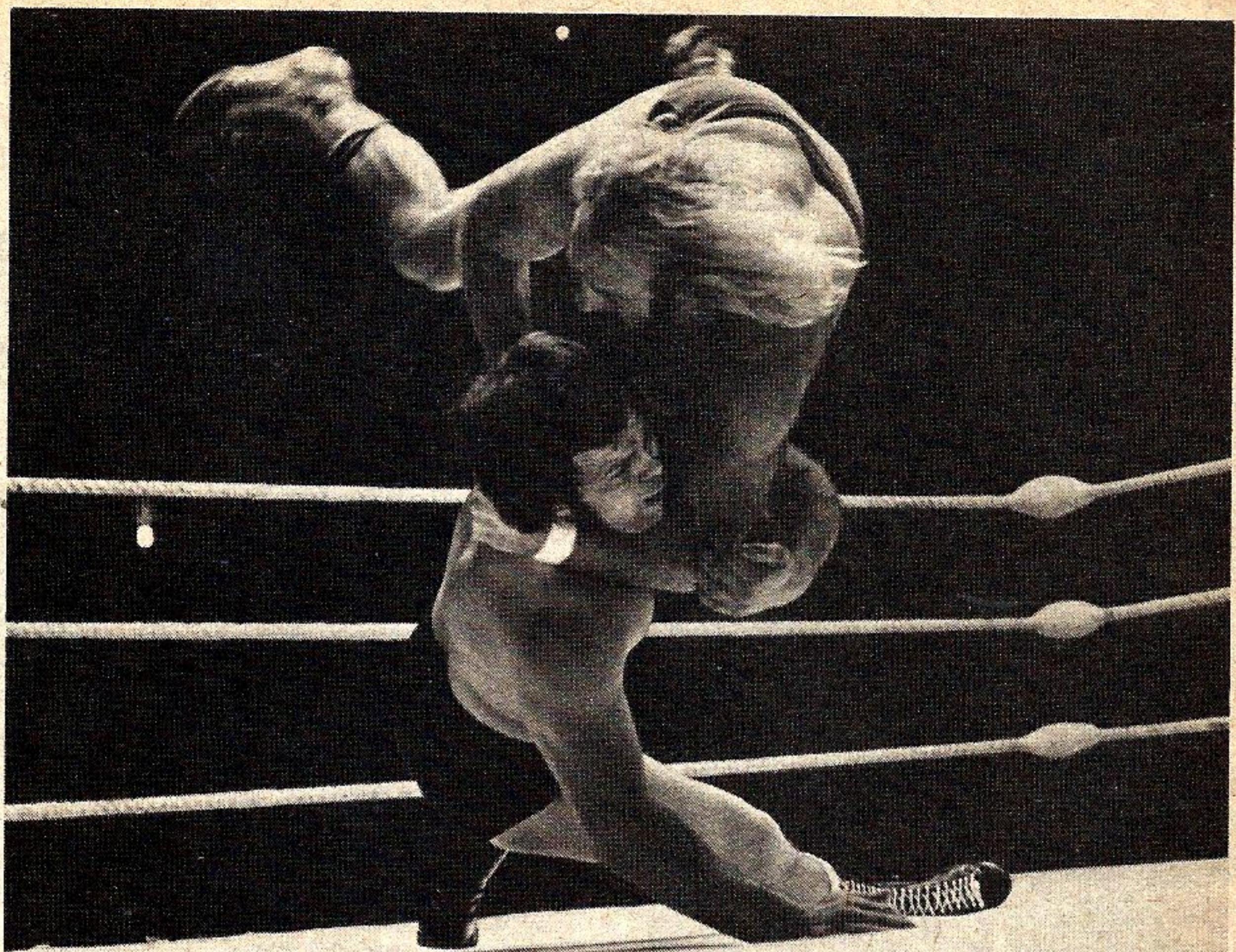
The newly crowned tag team champion, Aiko Sato and Bob Geigel defeated the men from whom they recently won the title, Ken Mantell and Ron Bass. It was a great match in which Sato proved to be one of the most impressive wrestlers in the area.

TENNESSEE TURMOIL By Eddie Gilbert

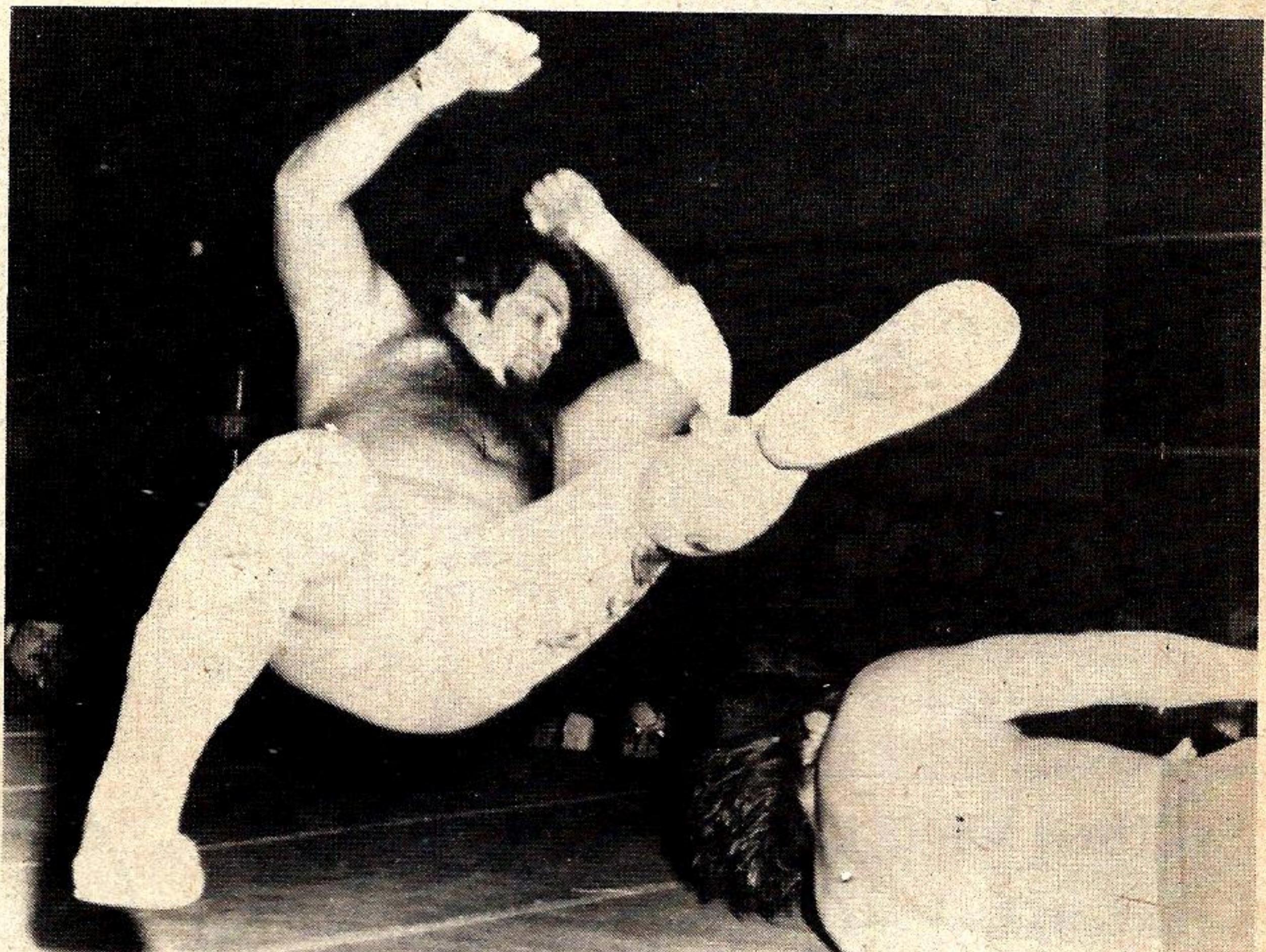
The top men in the area, 18 strong, traveled to Memphis in hopes of winning the big Battle Royal. It was a wild free-for-all marked by some of the roughest action seen in a long time.

The first man eliminated in the brawl was Professor Toru Tanaka, victim of an alliance between Bearcat Brown and Tommy Gilbert. He was busy trying to batter Bill Dundee at the time and never saw them coming. He was soon joined by a host of other grapplers who sailed over the ropes and into defeat.

Even with 12 men in the ring, fans



Above: Ted Oates' ability to send Goulet hurtling through the air is one of many reasons Ted earned a title shot against Terry Funk. Oates came close to being the new NWA champ. Below: Jerry Lawler's great skill and brutal tactics almost won for him the Memphis Battle Royal. Jerry's conceit caused his defeat!



found themselves watching a savage slugfest between Jerry Lawler and Jerry Jarrett. While others sailed over the ropes, all the crowd's fascination was fixed on the brawl. Finally, Jarrett spun over the ropes and Lawler raged on.

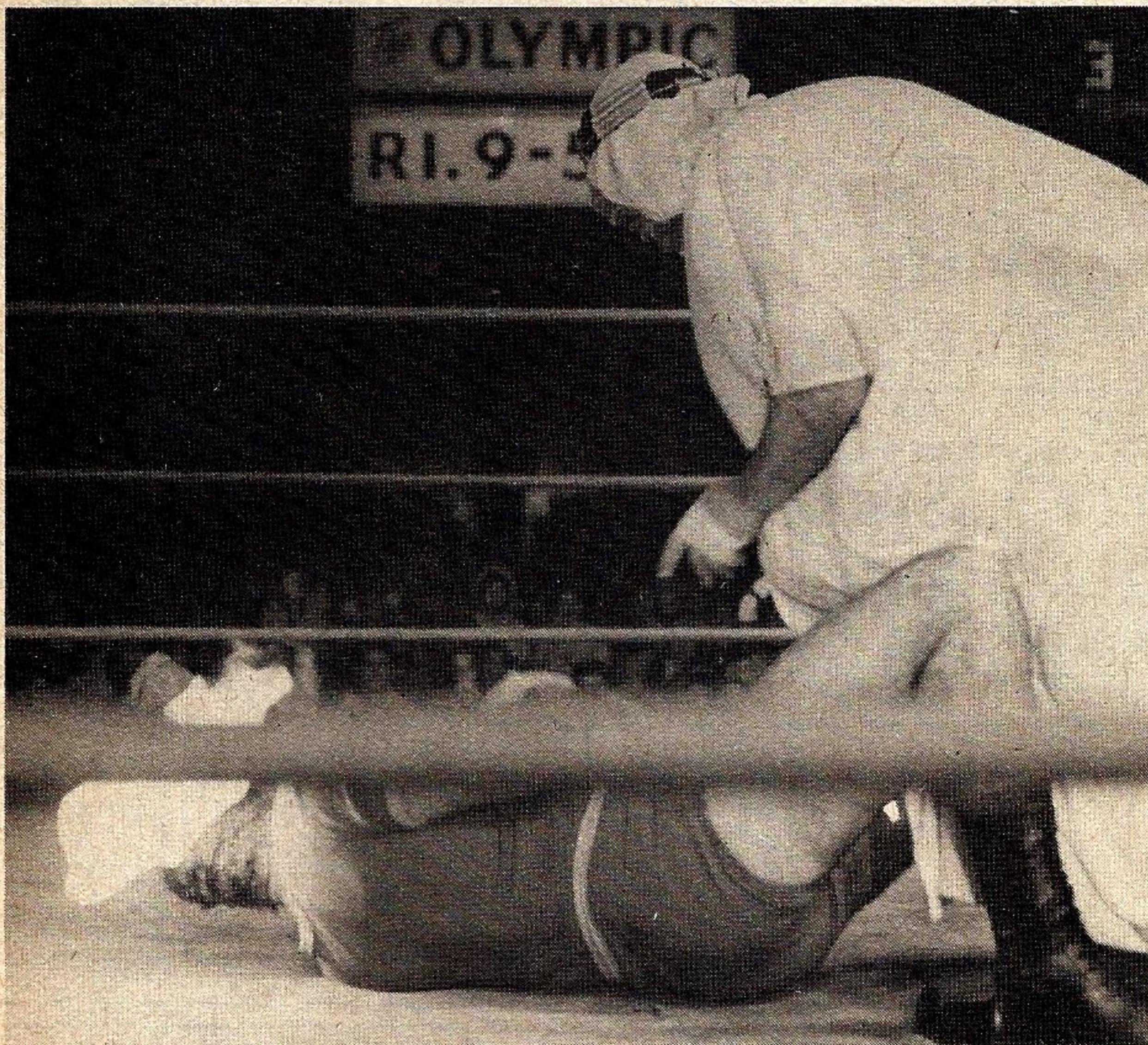
The last three men in the ring were Lawler, Dewayne Peel, and Tommy Rich. Jerry cleverly perched on the ring post and watched a furious encounter between Rich and Peel. Dewayne pulled out a chain and

smashed Tommy over the head, opening a huge gash. It looked like it would be between Lawler and Peel but Jerry had other ideas. He knocked Peel off Rich and placed Tommy on top of his unconscious foe. That left a staggered Rich and Lawler.

That's why no one was more surprised than the over-confident Lawler when Tommy captured him in a Greco-Roman backdrop and became the winner of the Memphis Battle Royal! □

YOU ASKED US

Okay fans. You asked for it and here it is. Each month either **INSIDE WRESTLING** or **THE WRESTLER** will publish your column—“YOU ASKED US.” Just jot down a question and the wrestler you’d like us to ask it to and send it to: **You Asked Us, THE WRESTLER, P.O. Box 58, Rockville Centre, N.Y. 11571.** Questions will be answered only in this column.



The only person who knows how Sheik throws fire is the despised Arab himself! If people could figure out how he did it, then there's a good chance his flaming reign of terror would be stopped!

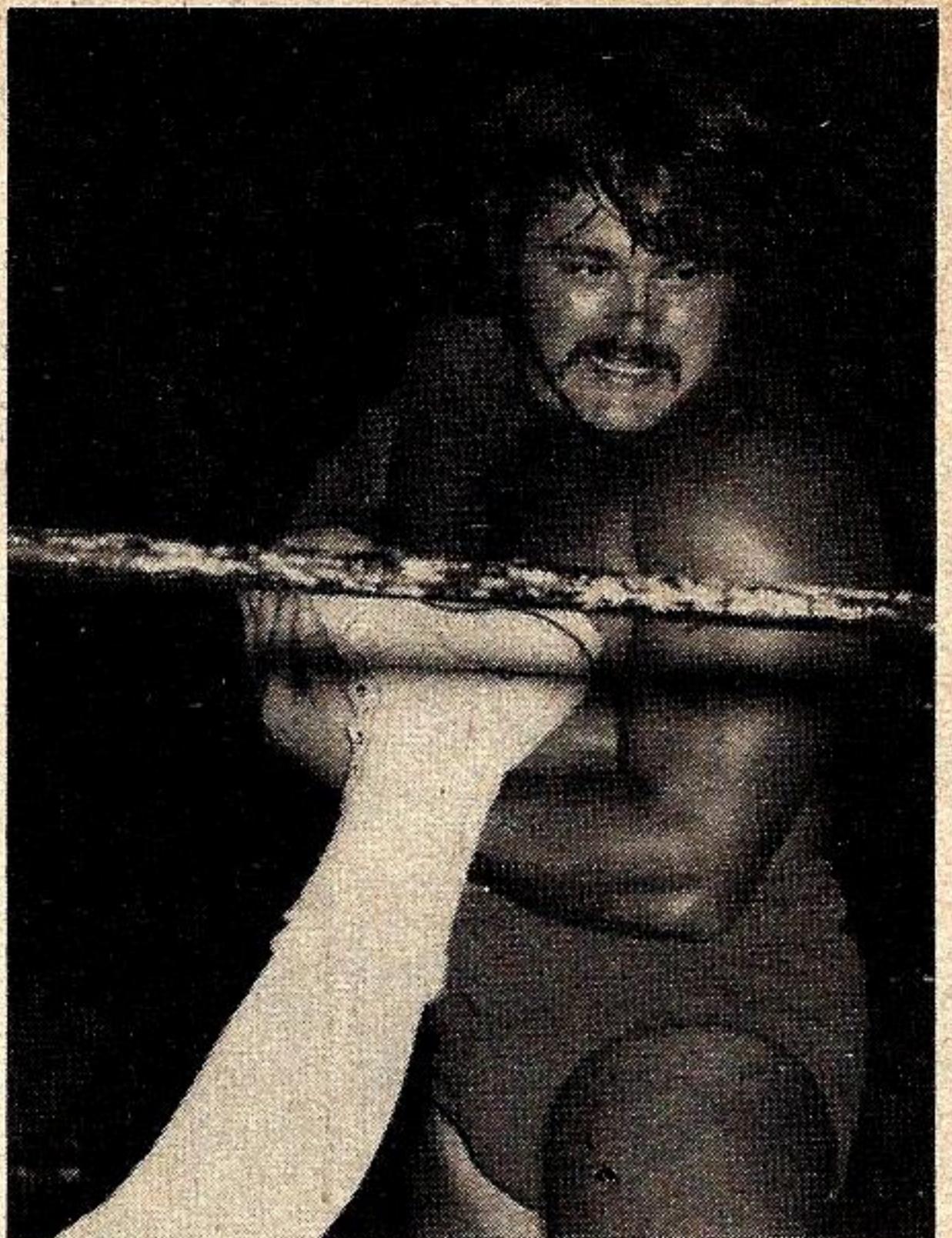
Q: When Harley Race was in the Mid-Atlantic areas, he had some trouble with Ric Flair. Does he intend to return and win Ric's Mid-Atlantic title?—Tim Harris, Stuarts Draft, Virginia

A: “Let’s set the damn record straight,” demands Race. “I never had any trouble with that punk kid

and I never will. Yeah, I’ll be back. And I’ll fix that braggart’s wagon once and for all!”

Q: Does Kevin Sullivan want to wrestle Bruno Sammartino for the World Wide Wrestling Federation title?—Karen Szewczyk, Housatonic Massachusetts

A: “Eventually,” Kevin replies. “I’m



Kevin Sullivan (above) has a good many fans who want to see the young man get a title shot.

not quite ready to wrestle for a title shot yet. I want to take my time and get plenty of good experience before attempting anything that big.”

Q: What is Haystacks Calhoun’s hometown?—Matt Moore, Orange Park, Florida

A: Morgans Corner, Arkansas.

Q: Is there any chance Jerry Lawler will wrestle in the WWWF areas?—Laurie Perry, Jamestown, Rhode Island

A: “I’d love to, but the promoters won’t let me,” says Lawler. “Each time I call they say Bruno is too scared to wrestle me; please leave him alone.”

Q: Could you please give me facts about Mil Mascaras’ background —how many masks does he own, etc.?—Ken Rizzo, N. Massapequa, New York

A: A full biography of Mil appeared in **INSIDE WRESTLING**/Sept. 1975.

Q: I would like to know how The Sheik throws fire?—Mark Freuler, Phoenixville, Pennsylvania

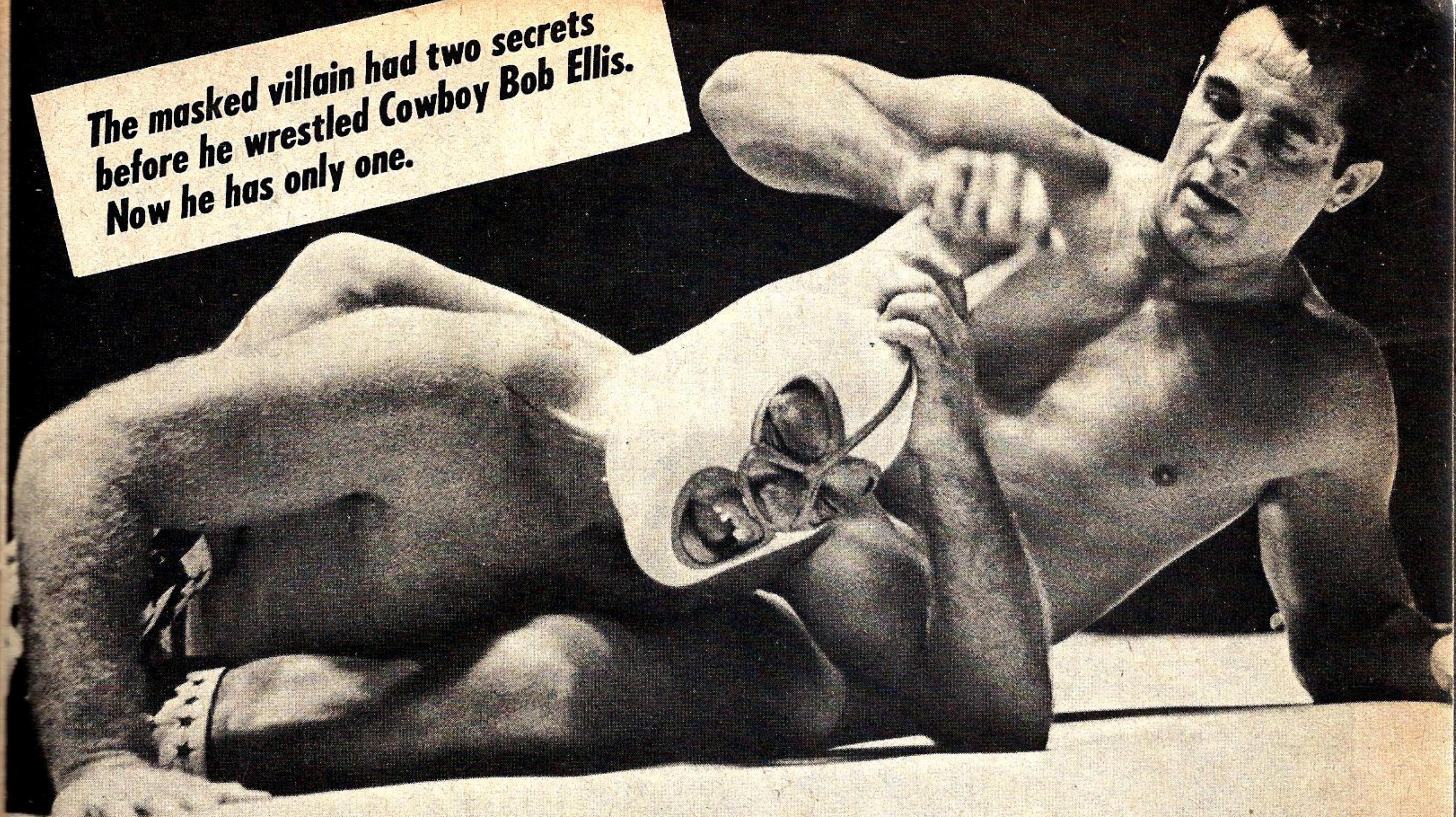
A: So would we. No one has been able to uncover the wild arab’s mystical secret since he began his career. “It’s a power given to him by the gods,” claims manager Abdullah Farouk.

Q: Who are The Masked Executioners appearing in the WWWF?—Peter Monja, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

A: At this time their identity is unknown. “If other wrestlers knew

(Continued on page 50)

The masked villain had two secrets
before he wrestled Cowboy Bob Ellis.
Now he has only one.



THE DESTROYER S-t-r-e-t-c-h-e-s HIS LUCK

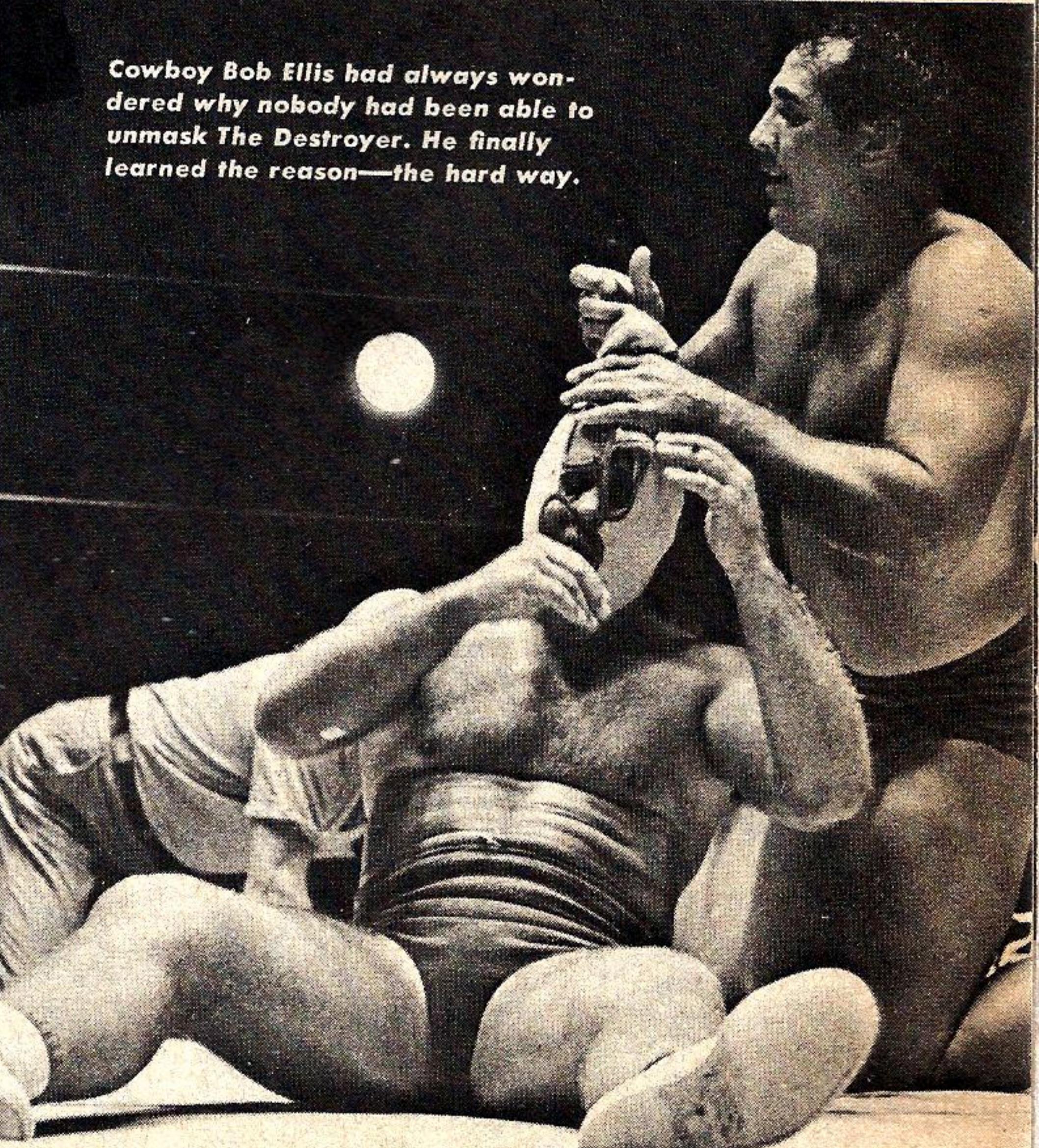
MIDWAY DURING the first fall of their blazing match at San Diego, Calif., Cowboy Bob Ellis clamped a powerful scissors on The Destroyer and made a grab for his opponent's mask.

Ellis had come all the way from San Angelo, Texas, his home town, for just this purpose: to reveal the identity of the hooded villain who had been rampaging up and down the West Coast, knocking off one challenger after another.

What had mystified—and intrigued—Ellis was that nobody had been able to rip off The Destroyer's hood, though they'd had ample opportunity to do so. Now Bob had the same opportunity and this time, he vowed, things would be a lot different.

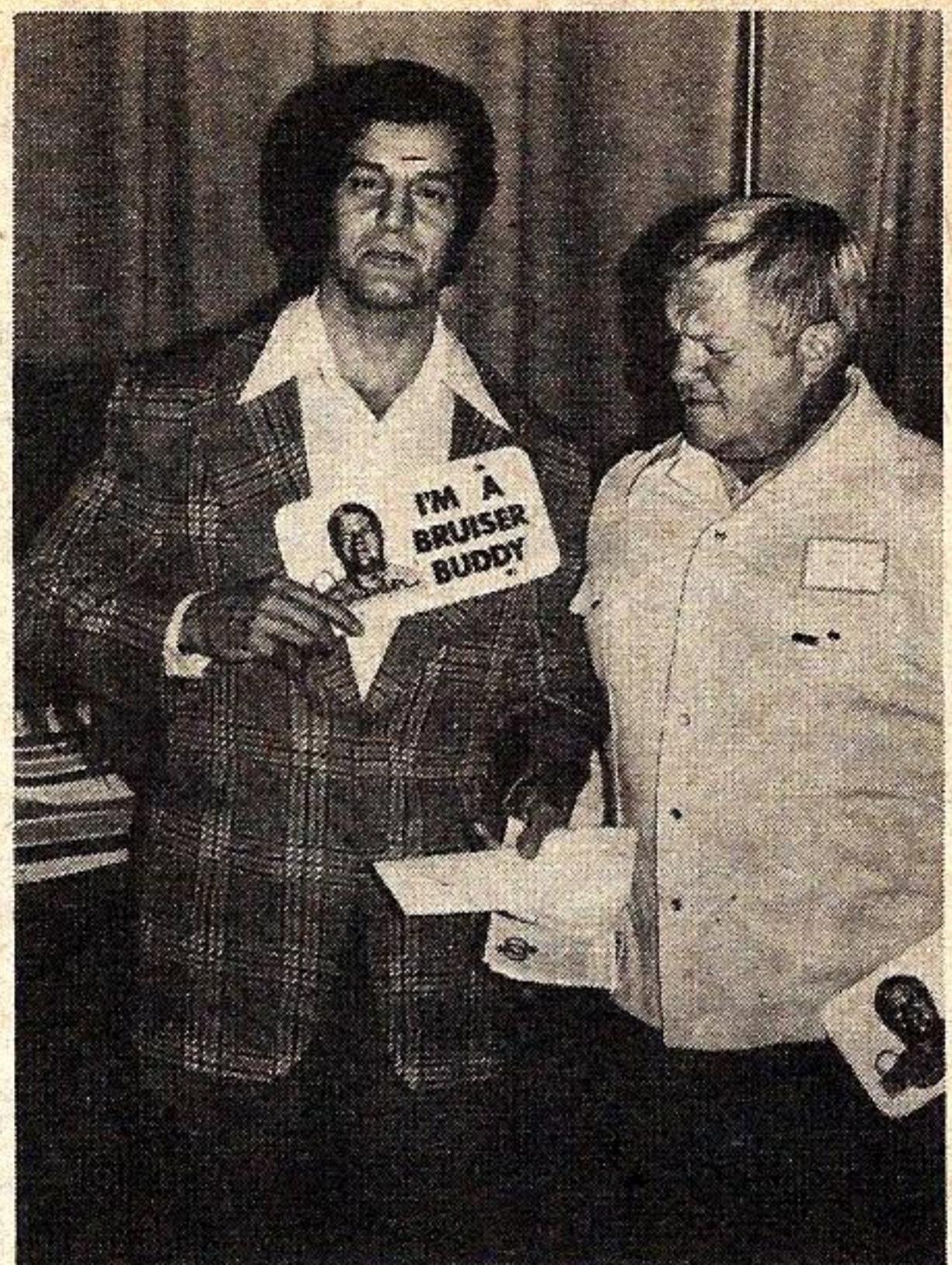
He reached out eagerly for the mask and gave it a mighty tug. It stretched more than a foot—but wouldn't come off! Cowboy was puzzled. He tried yanking it sideways. Same result, The mask

Cowboy Bob Ellis had always wondered why nobody had been able to unmask The Destroyer. He finally learned the reason—the hard way.



(Continued on page 63)

BRUISER'S TOUGHEST BATTLE



Peter Lupus, star of "Mission Impossible," is proud to hold a license plate proclaiming him a Bruiser buddy (above). Bruiser tells how the audience can get this license plate (left).

THE CROWD WAS on its feet cheering. Bruiser was handily defeating his opponent. The man's entire being was concentrated toward victory. He existed only for wrestling.

When the match was over, Bruiser's opponent could hardly move. The man had been through an ordeal few can survive. Bruiser's reputation for mauling opponents senseless is well-deserved. "Merciless" is a word often used to describe Bruiser in a match. It's a fitting word.

Reporters who went back to Bruiser's dressing room after the match were instead quickly ushered into a bus. Within seconds, Bruiser joined them. He had rushed right from the arena and changed into his

HELPING HANDICA



EXCLUSIVE PHOTOS BY SCOTT ROMER

THE PPED

Here's a side of Bruiser many fans don't know about. Here's a man in whom the entire world can take pride!

Bruiser is honored to pose with the "March of Dimes" poster children. The grappler is sure the diseases which afflict the youngsters can be eradicated with the aid of medical science and funds from the general public—which means all of us!

streetclothes. He answered questions while toweling his hair dry.

"Do you know there's a law against kidnapping?" one reporter asked as his comrades laughingly cheered.

"I'm giving you guys a chance to do something decent," Bruiser declared, "a new experience for most of you." When the laughter died down, he continued seriously, "This bus is going to the television station. Some of you may know there's a *March of Dimes* telethon going on there. I'm donating my services. The charity can use any and all publicity. That's where you guys come in.

"You'll put this story in newspapers and magazines, in sections where stories on the great work done by *March of Dimes* don't usually appear. You guys can leave the studio at any time; the bus will take you back to the arena. If you want, though, there's always a need for people to man the telephones."

Those who don't know Bruiser well were in a state of shock. They had always supposed Bruiser battered the helpless rather than lend a helping hand. They never had seen the photo of Bruiser on T-shirts, bulletin boards and posters, designed to raise money for the National Paraplegic Foundation. Those close to Bruiser know he's a compassionate man dedicated to relieving the agonies of the afflicted.

The bus pulled into the studio's parking lot and Bruiser ran into the studio. He knew there were people
(Continued on page 48)

WHY JERRY B



Can Jerry Brisco ever be forgiven for turning Moondog Mayne back into a savage maniac?

PHOTOS BY GENE GORDON

"I CANNOT IMAGINE Moon-dog Mayne as anything but a rulebreaking, loud mouthed, vicious moron," said Jerry Brisco to a friend who had just returned from a trip to California. "And you try to honestly tell me he has become a scientific wrestler? I find it very hard to believe!"

Jerry's friend insisted it was true. He had been on the coast when Moondog Mayne was wrestling there, and had witnessed many matches in which Mayne had been involved. Jerry still

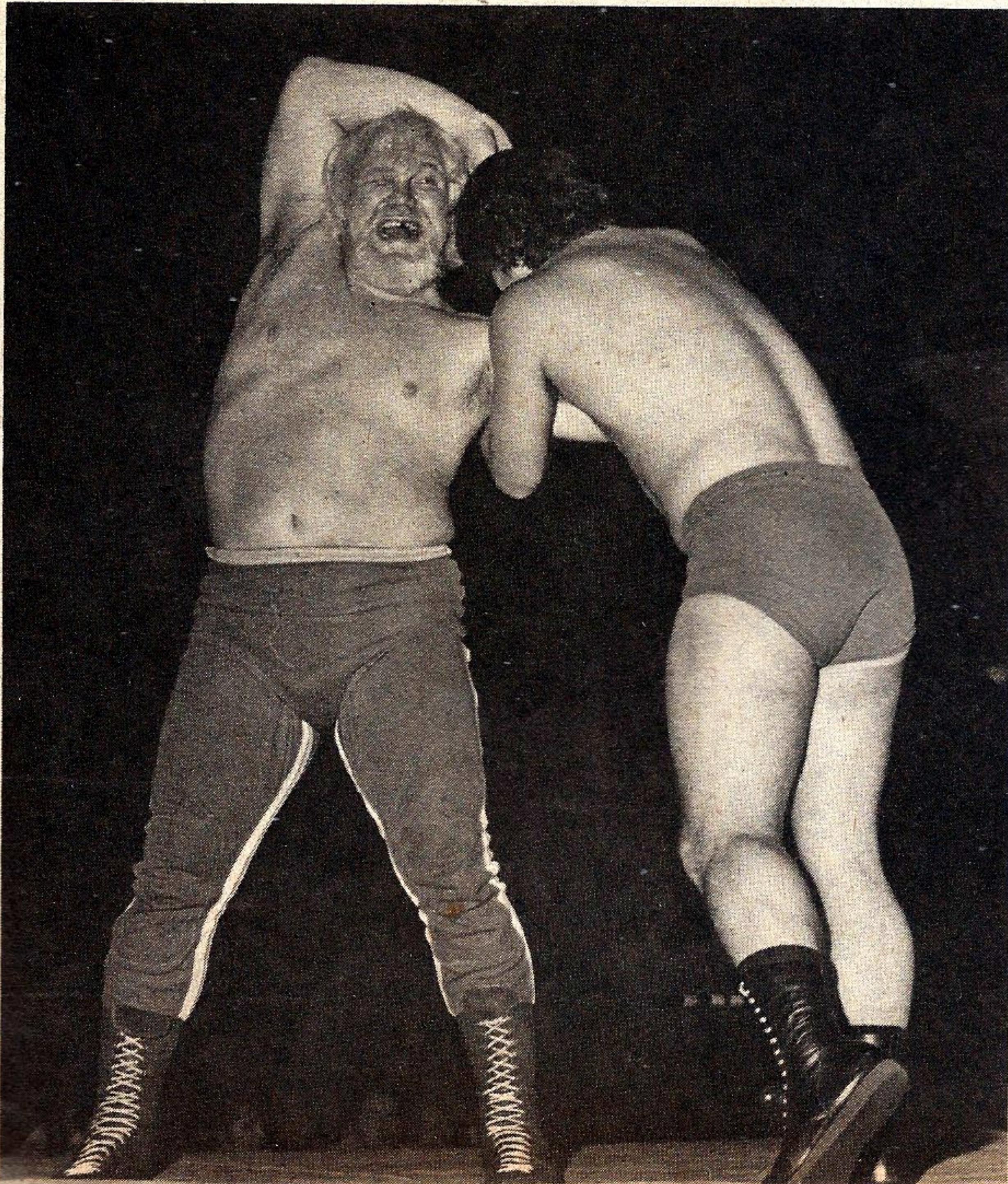
could not believe the report, no matter how much his friend tried to convince him.

Sometimes the brashness of youth can blur proper judgement. Young Jerry Brisco clung stubbornly to his beliefs about Moondog Mayne, thinking no man can change and mend his previous ways. But for once, Jerry was in error. Moondog *had* changed. He had fallen out with former friends who followed the rulebreaking path. He was a different wrestler.

When a Georgia wrestling promoter first approached Jerry with the proposal of a match between the young wrestler and Moondog Mayne, Brisco was reluctant. He remembered all too well Moondog's vicious tactics. He didn't want to tangle with Mayne again. However, the promoter insisted, and the match was signed.

Soon Jerry was hearing reports from several different people about how Moondog had changed his tactics. But the young, stubborn grappler refused to believe a word anyone said. He told everyone he knew all too well about how a wrestler can hide his vicious intents under a veil of scientific wrestling. He was going to have to trust only his own judgement in this situation. And his judgement

BRISCO HAD TO SNEAK- ATTACK MOONDOG MAYNE

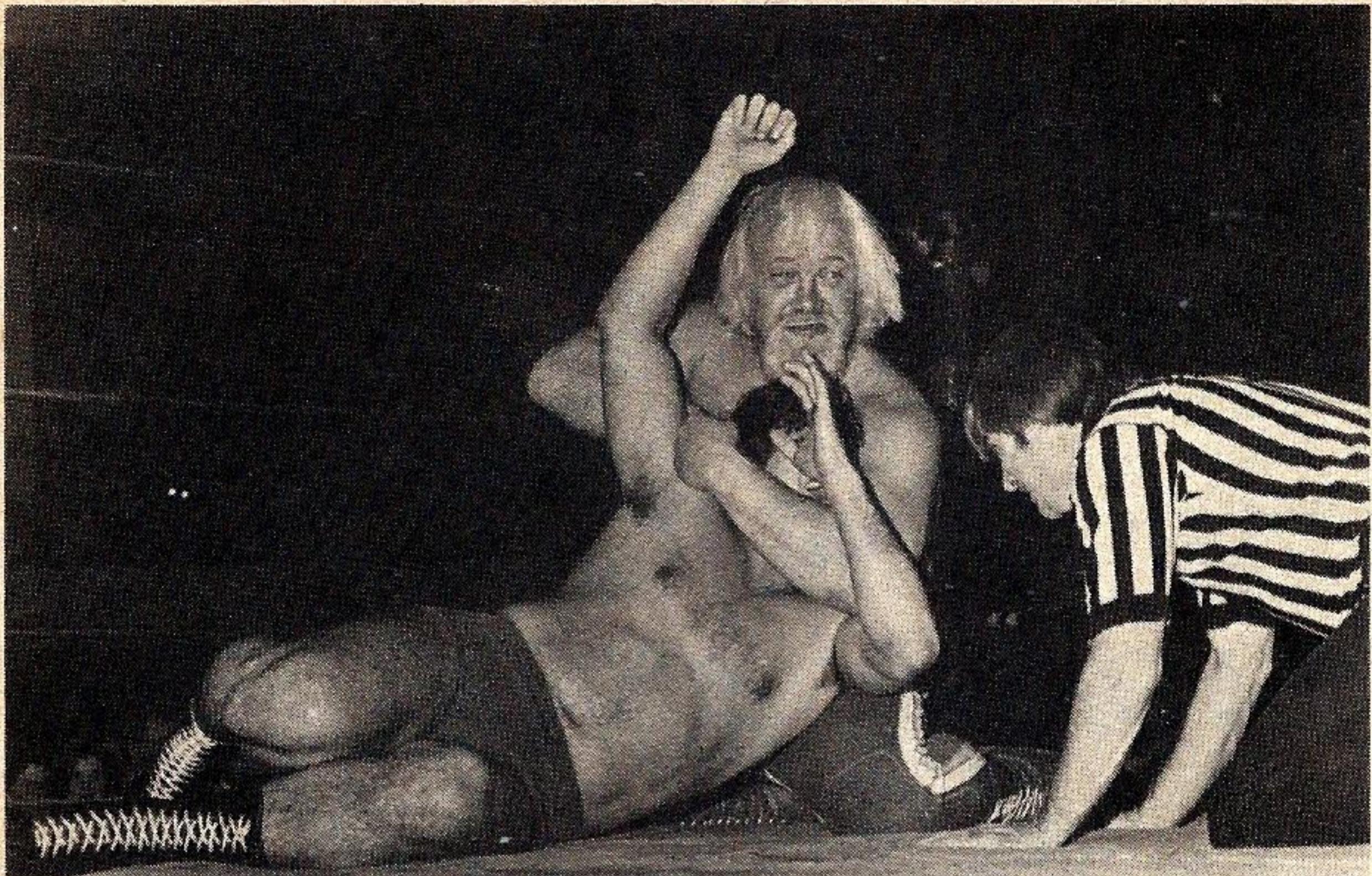


Using every ounce of strength in their powerful bodies, Jerry Brisco and Moondog Mayne lock in the test of power, awesome in its intensity. The contest went on for over five minutes when Brisco finally toppled Moondog hard to the canvas.

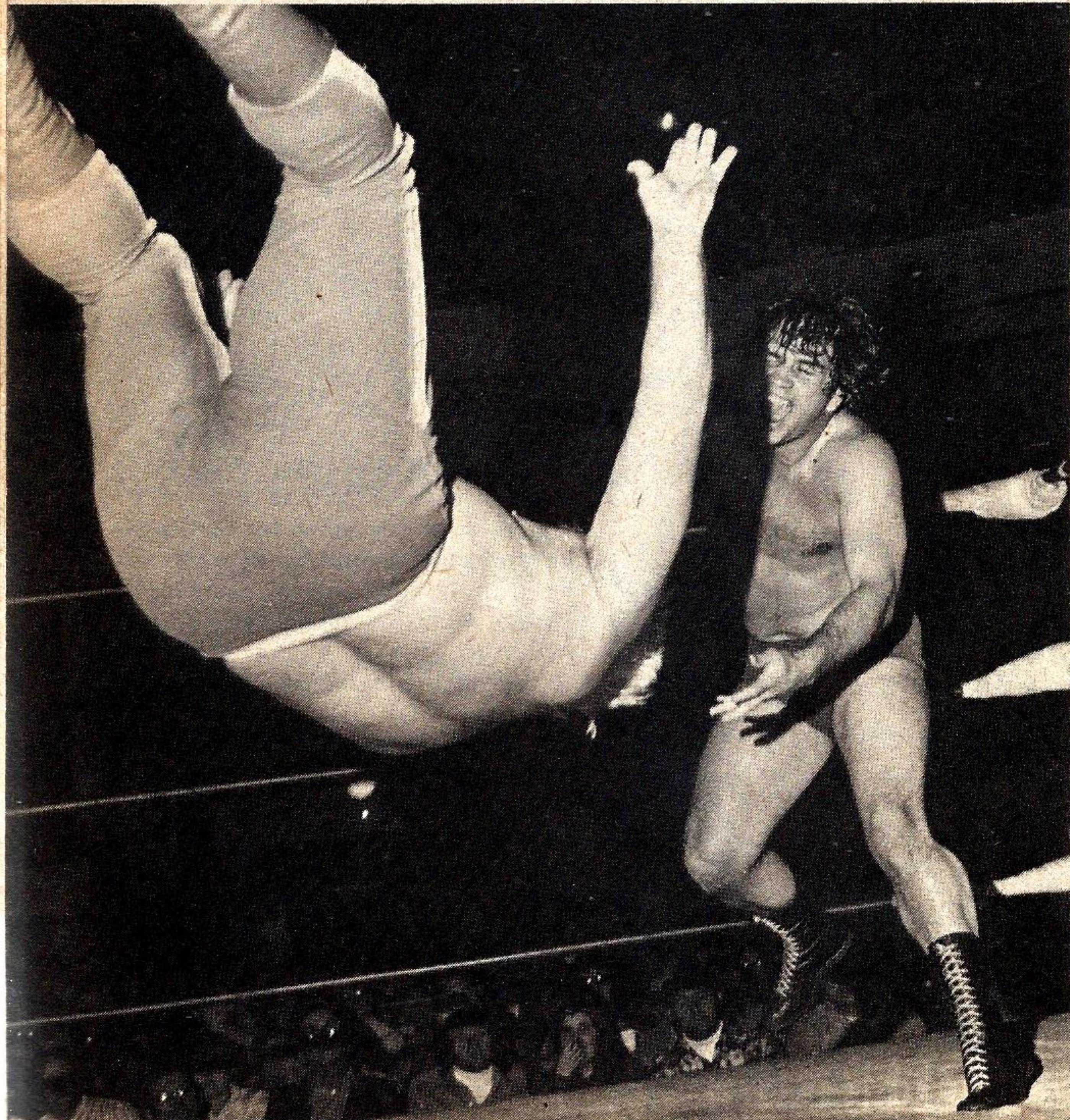
told him to believe Mayne was still a rule breaker.

Following his own judgement, Jerry trained accordingly. He decided to match Moondog tactic for tactic. So he perfected several maneuvers not listed in the rulebooks as being legal. By the time his match with Mayne came up, Brisco was armed with several tactics designed to injure an opponent.

Many people feel this is the point where problems began. Certainly Moondog Mayne thinks the disastrous results which followed could have been avoided if Jerry Brisco had not been so stubborn and had listened to other people before he stepped into the ring that night. Mayne's manager, Rock Hunter, believes Jerry displayed a complete lack of good sense in what he did. Most people are unsure if either Jerry or Moondog will ever be the same again.



Above: Moondog Mayne's face reflects cruel cunning as he squeezes Brisco's skull in an agonizing headlock. Moondog would be sure to choke his foe if it weren't for the watchful eye of the mat official. Below: Brisco sends Mayne hurtling through the air with a perfectly executed flip. It was one of the few legal maneuvers in a match which showed a full repertoire of the dirtiest tactics!



Jerry entered the arena as the man the fans favored. As he walked down the aisle toward the ring, the spectators cheered him, and he acknowledged their adulation. Then Moondog entered. The fans started booing him, but he ignored their jeers; he realized it would take time for the fans in Georgia to see he had changed his tactics. With his manager at his side, Mayne climbed into the squared circle.

Then all hell broke loose. Before Mayne even had a chance to remove his serape, Jerry attacked, though the bell starting the match had yet to be rung!

The fans were shocked to see Jerry as the rulebreaker in this situation. But no one was as shocked as Moondog Mayne was. He simply had not expected an attack before the bell.

Moondog did the only thing he could be expected to do. He returned Jerry's attack with a vicious assault of his own. What could have been a clean, scientific match turned into a brutal brawl.

Even the unneeded bell ringing did nothing to change the character of this battle, except to introduce the referee into the action. After a series of kicks, punches, and attempted chokes, the referee decided to disqualify both wrestlers.

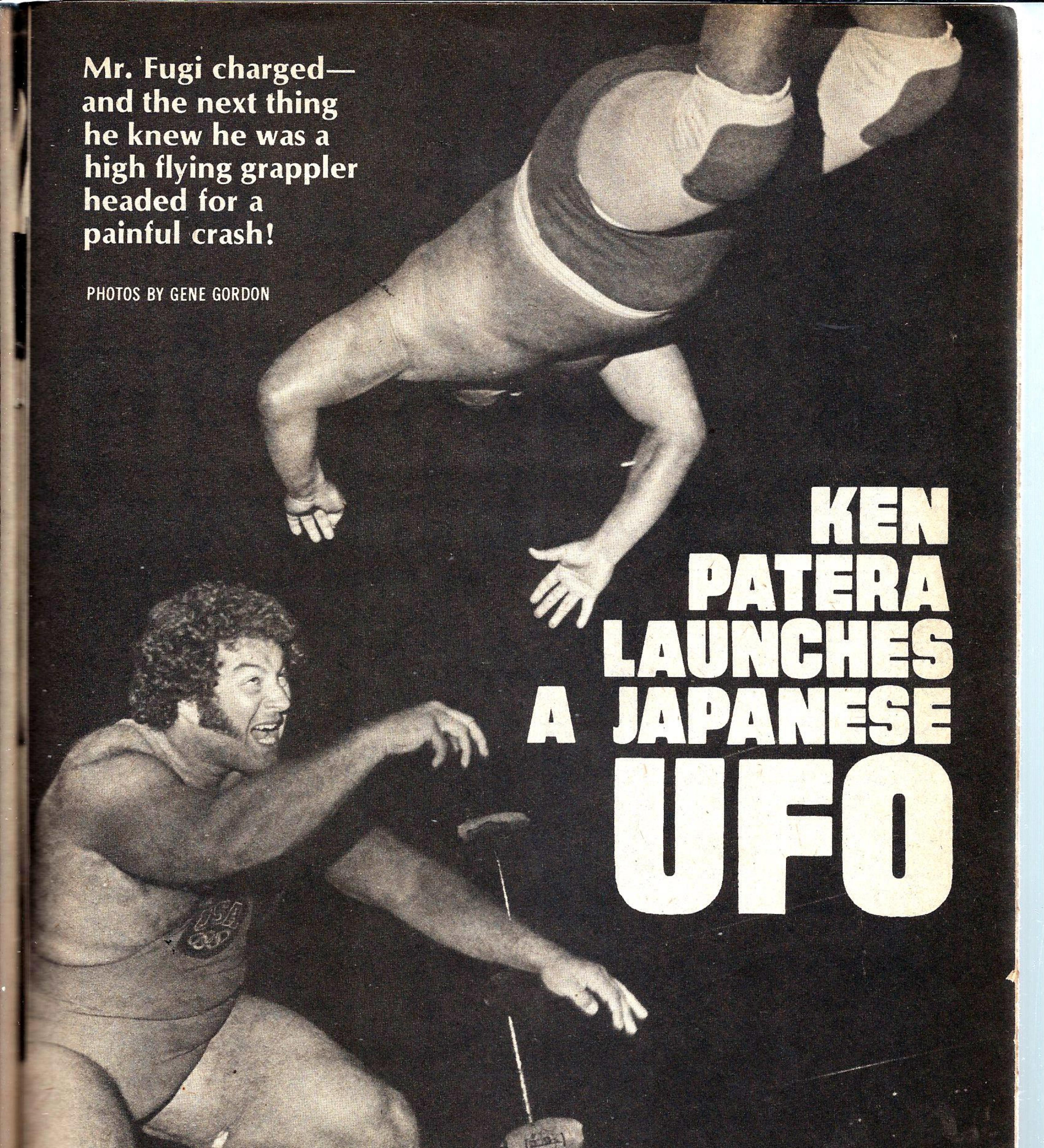
Afterward, Jerry spoke with reporters in his dressing room. He told them, "I knew Moondog Mayne had not really changed. Didn't you see how he used all sorts of illegal tactics on me in there? You must have seen him try to choke me."

One reporter a bit braver than the others, said, "We saw all that, Jerry, but we also saw you attack Mayne before the bell. Why?"

"That's simple," replied Brisco, "I attacked first because I knew what kind of tactics Mayne would be using. I wanted to hit instead of be hit. In any case, he didn't change."

Meanwhile, Moondog Mayne had a few comments of his own. "I did not plan to use those kinds of tactics tonight," he said in a release written by Rock Hunter. "Brisco forced me into doing what I did. I came back to Georgia to be a scientific wrestler. I had planned on this being a scientific match. It was Jerry Brisco who introduced the illegal moves into the action, not me. I hold him responsible."

"I will no longer predict what methods I will use in future matches. Jerry Brisco has made me change my mind about scientific wrestling—it is no different than being a rule-breaker."



**Mr. Fugi charged—
and the next thing
he knew he was a
high flying grappler
headed for a
painful crash!**

PHOTOS BY GENE GORDON

KEN PATERA LAUNCHES A JAPANESE UFO

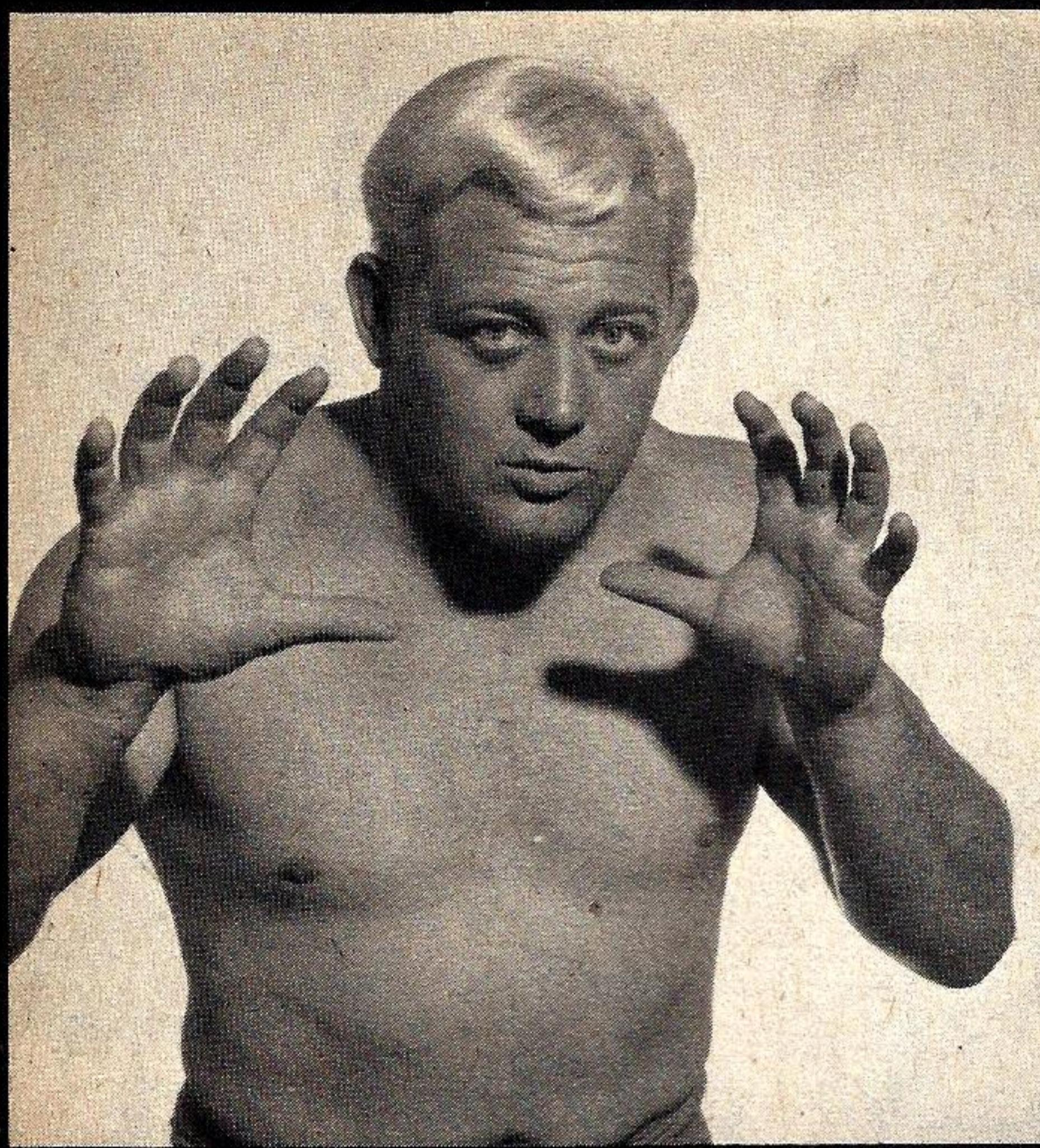
IT'S A BIRD... It's a plane... No, it's Mr. Fugi, flying high over the ropes and straight into the laps of several members of the audience in the wrestling arena.

Like an unidentified flying object

being hurled through the skies at a tremendous speed and with a tremendous force, Mr. Fugi sailed into the throng of spectators, unexpected and unwanted. He, like many other before him, was the victim of one of

Ken Patera's famous baseball-like pitches, where a wrestler is substituted for a ball as the projectile. It is one of Patera's more lethal maneuvers; one he uses only on his toughest oppo-

(Continued on page 52)



"HOW PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING

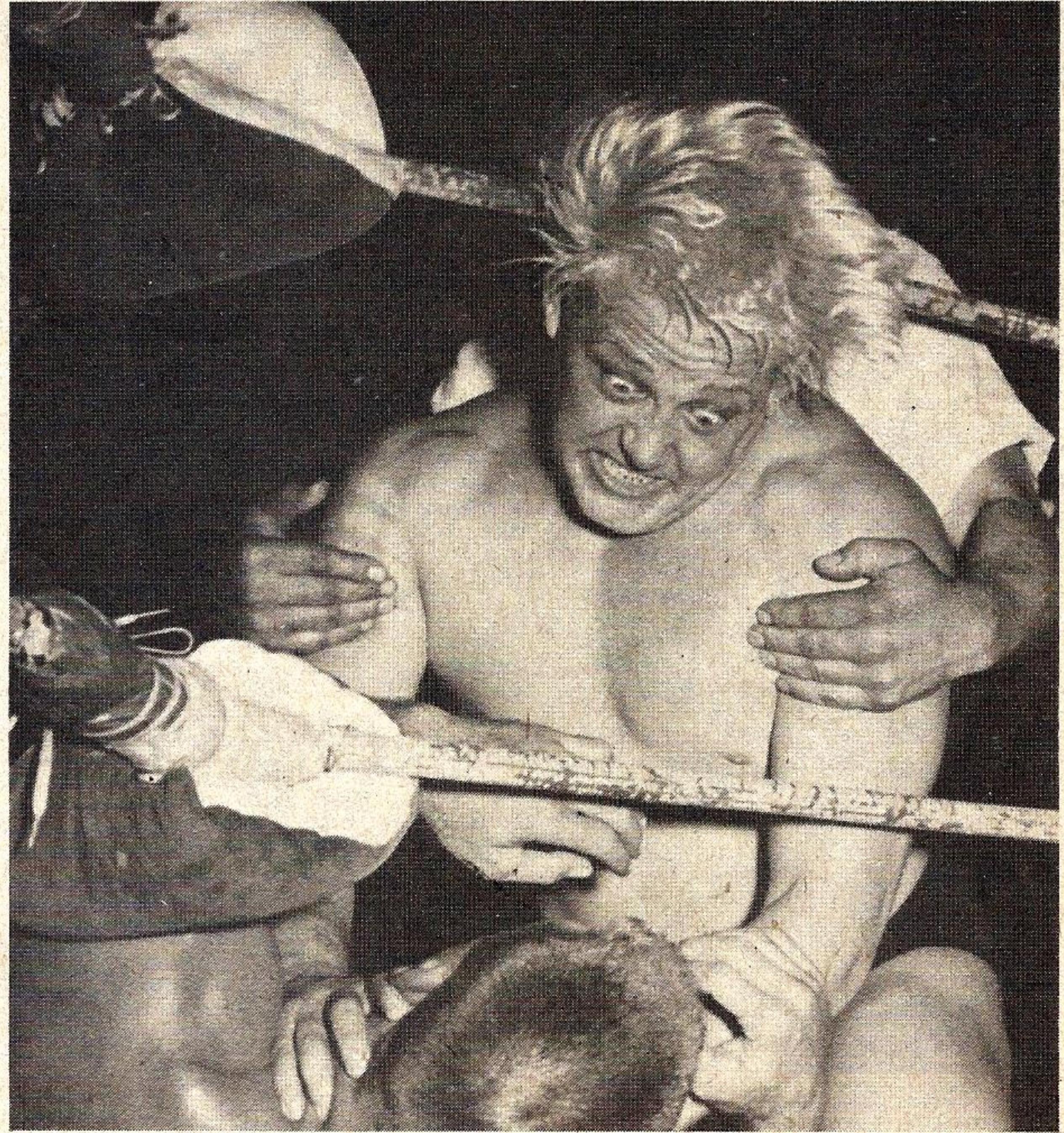
BY RAY STEVENS

EVERYTHING I HAVE has had to be taken with my bare hands. I was never given anything, including an even break. If something could be done the hard way, that's the way I did it.

At the age of 12, I would spend eight hours a day in the local gymnasium. I thought I'd become a professional athlete and to hell with school. I didn't have enough brains to know most professional athletes are college graduates! There were a lot of young kids in the gym with me in those days, just like me. Every one of them is dirt poor and ignorant today.

By the time I was 15, my education was shot. There was no other course for me to take but be a professional wrestler. I was living with my aunt, Molly Pope, at the time. She was taking care of me after my parents' divorce. I think she knew my only hope to be somebody was as a professional wrestler. I was still attending school while working as a professional athlete. I'm the only man in pro wrestling to do that. The others were too smart.

While most guys were being coddled and educated in the amateurs, having the time of their lives on college scholarships, I was riding buses to sleazy arenas. I've seen this business



Eyes bulging maniacally, Ray Stevens ruthlessly chokes Wilbur Snyder as the referee desperately tries to pull Ray off his close to unconscious victim. It was matches like this which made Ray one of the most despised wrestlers in the world. It got to the point where Ray had to have a secret phone number and address!

I BROKE INTO PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING"

Our office is constantly flooded with letters asking how to become a professional grappler. We decided the only ones who really know are the professional wrestlers themselves. Therefore, each month a different wrestler will describe the trials and tribulations endured on the path to wrestling stardom

from the bottom up. The bottom is hell.

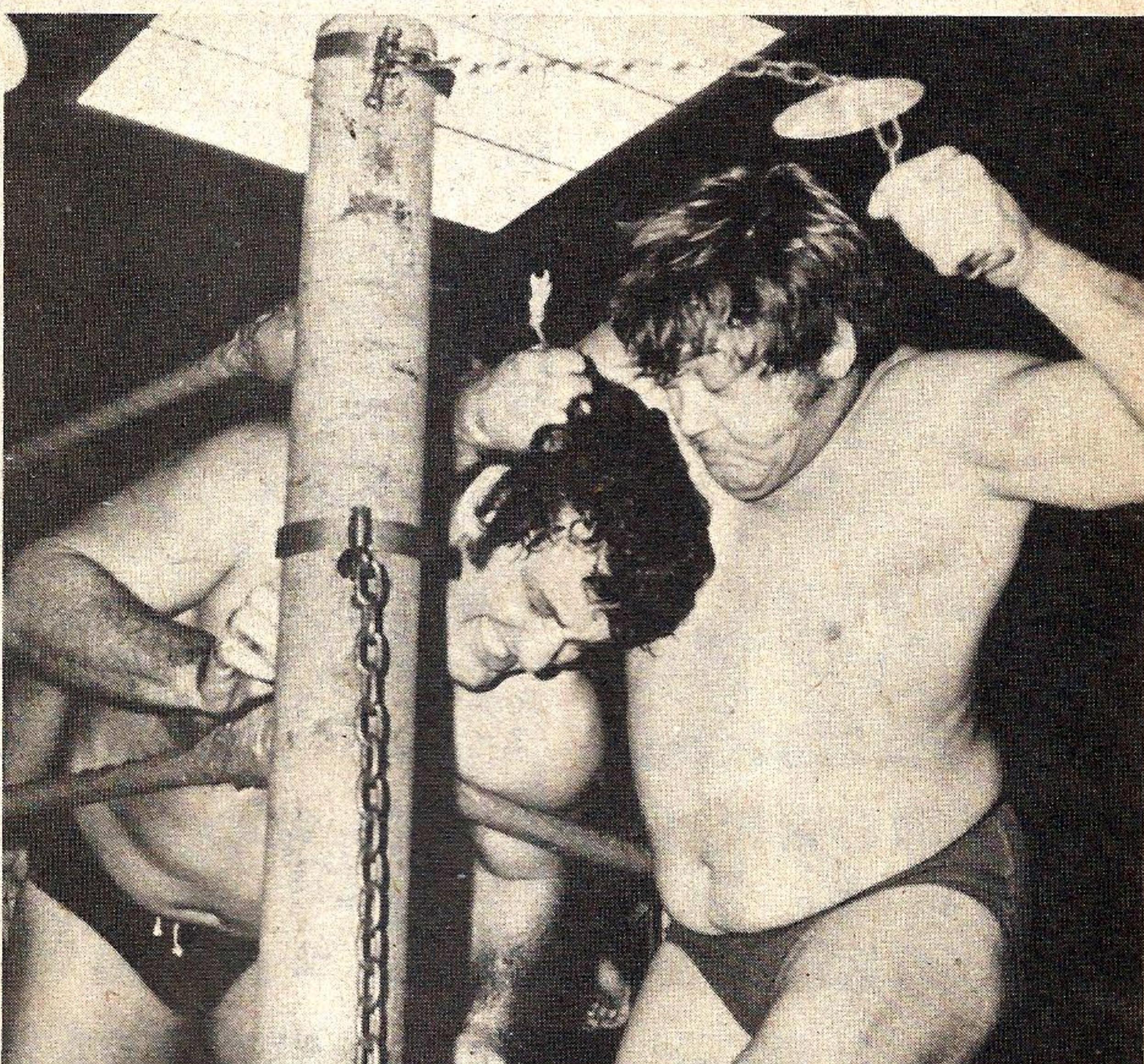
But I'm one of the greats. Even a broken leg and several cracked ribs couldn't stop me. I started making money, good money. Fans began to know me. And hate me. I didn't care; they paid for the privilege.

I found my place in wrestling. I loved everything about it. I especially liked winning. I was never too choosy about how I won, either.

That's how the fans got to know me. I brawled with guys from all over the country. No man was too tough for me to take him down a peg. Promoters were quick to realize the fans were getting more excited about my preliminary matches than they were about the main event. When they realized that, I was on my way to becoming a wealthy man.

I think I really felt like a wrestler the night of my first main event. I'd been walking the streets most of the day. I couldn't sit down for love or money. As I sat in the dressing room, my hands began to shake. When the man told me it was my time to wrestle, my body broke out into a cold sweat. I was more terrified than I had ever been before. My entire career depended on this bout.

I walked into the arena on trembling legs. Then I heard the crowd booing. They were screaming at me; cursing me to the rooftops. And I loved it! I grew relaxed and confident. After all, if I could get people this angry, I must be damn good!



Stevens cruelly slams Billy Robinson's head into the metal post while he whips a chain across his victim's face. It's all part of Stevens' philosophy of winning at any cost. It's no wonder Stevens is responsible for many men being permanently crippled.

From that match on, I was on the top of the world. I became the most hated man in San Francisco for years. People would fill the Cow Palace time and time again in the hopes of seeing

me get beaten. Those people made me a rich man.

I did it all wrong, the hardest way possible. But what I've got, no one on earth is ever going to take from me! □

Chavo Guerrero screams in fear and agony as the teeth of Ernie Ladd tear at the flesh of his forehead. Ladd's biting made a huge gash across Chavo's head and the blood poured from it, gushing down his face and splattering across his chest. Even veteran fans were sickened by Ladd's merciless assault!

PHOTOS BY THEO EHRET

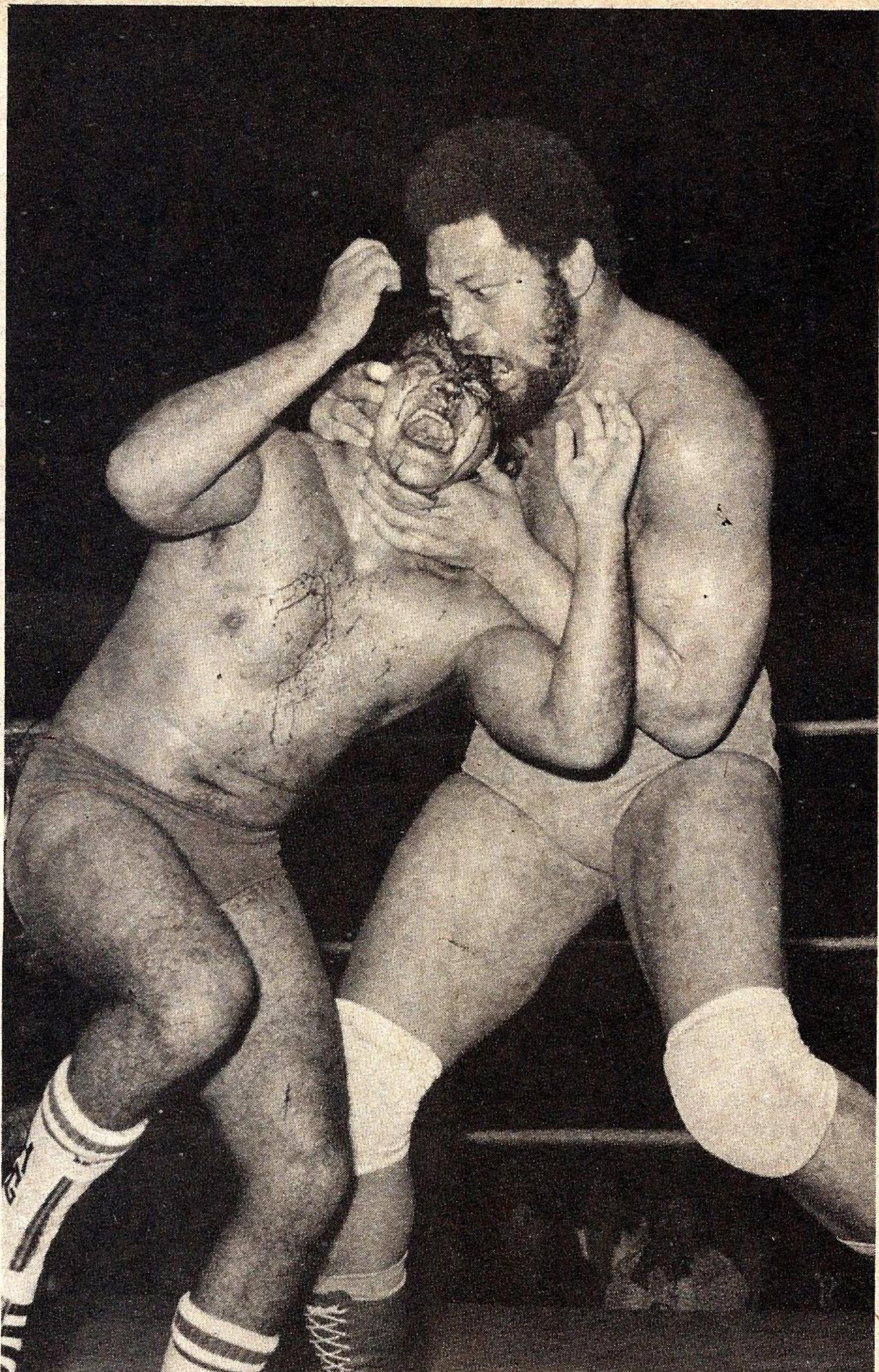
ERNIE LADD looked at the contract laying on the desk of one of the leading wrestling promoters in Los Angeles. Then he broke into gales of nearly-uncontrollable laughter.

"You want me to wrestle Chavo Guerrero?" Ernie asked incredulously. "Daddy, you have yourself a deal. Give me those papers. I am going to teach that little wetback one hell of a lesson he will never forget."

The promoter happily gave Ladd the contract to sign. He had wanted to bring Ernie and Chavo together for a match for a long time. Many fans had demanded such a match. Now both grapplers had signed and were more than ready to do battle.

The small-scale war between the two wrestlers had started quite by accident. Chavo, still considered a rookie in the wrestling world, had just defeated veteran wrestler, Sal Lothario. Ernie was in the arena that night for a different match, but he happened to hear the fans wildly cheering young Chavo.

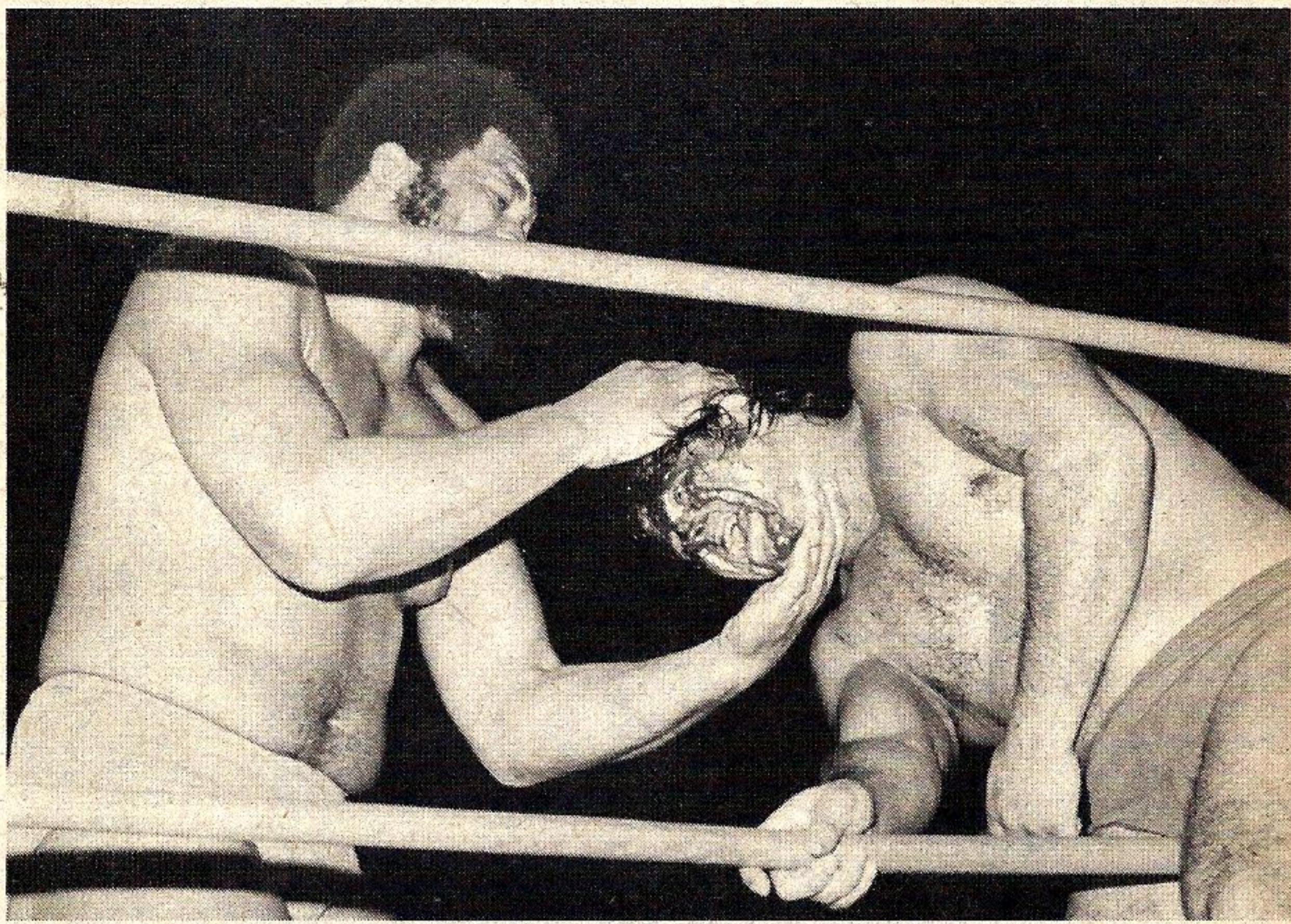
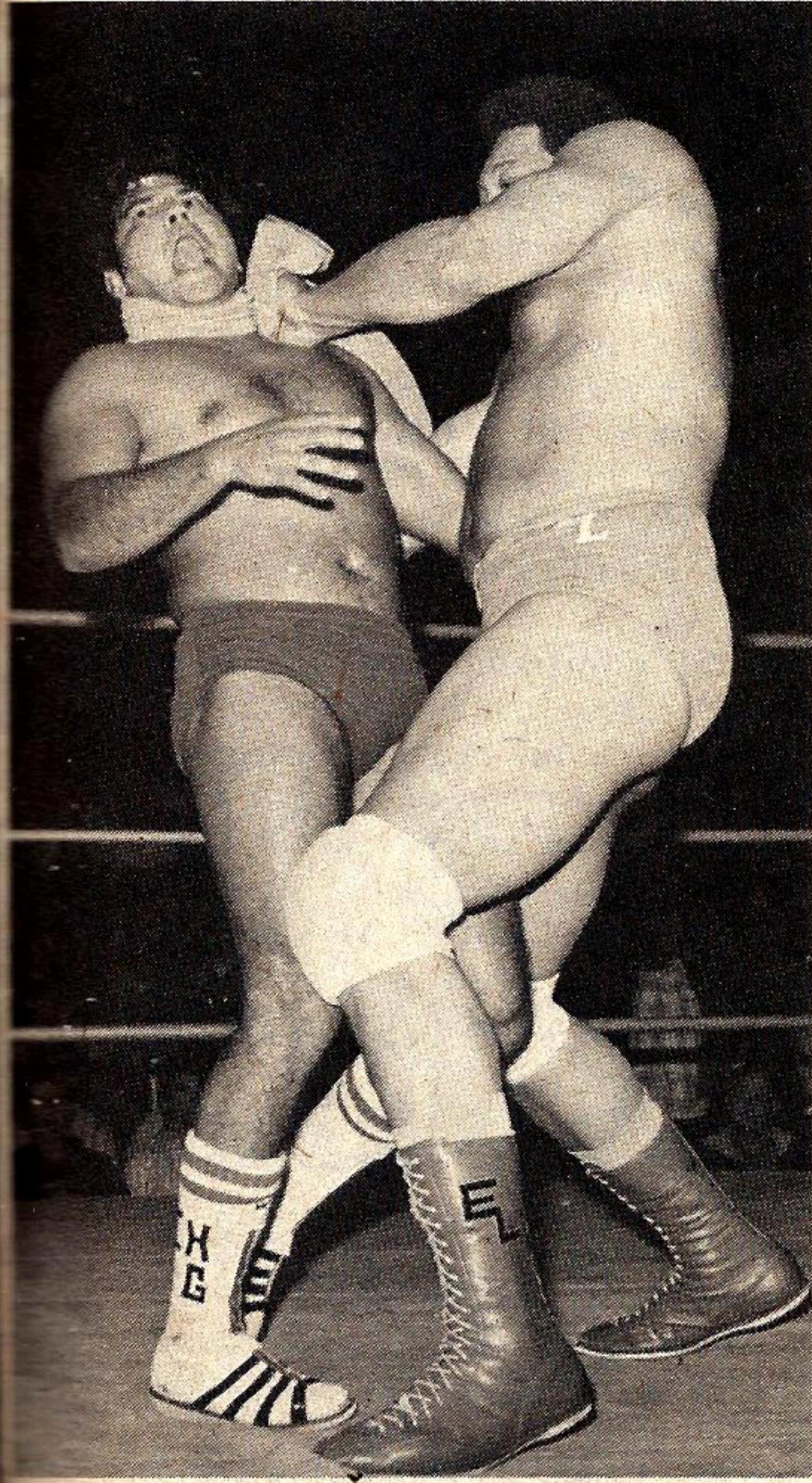
At that point, Ladd decided to teach the young rookie from Mexico a



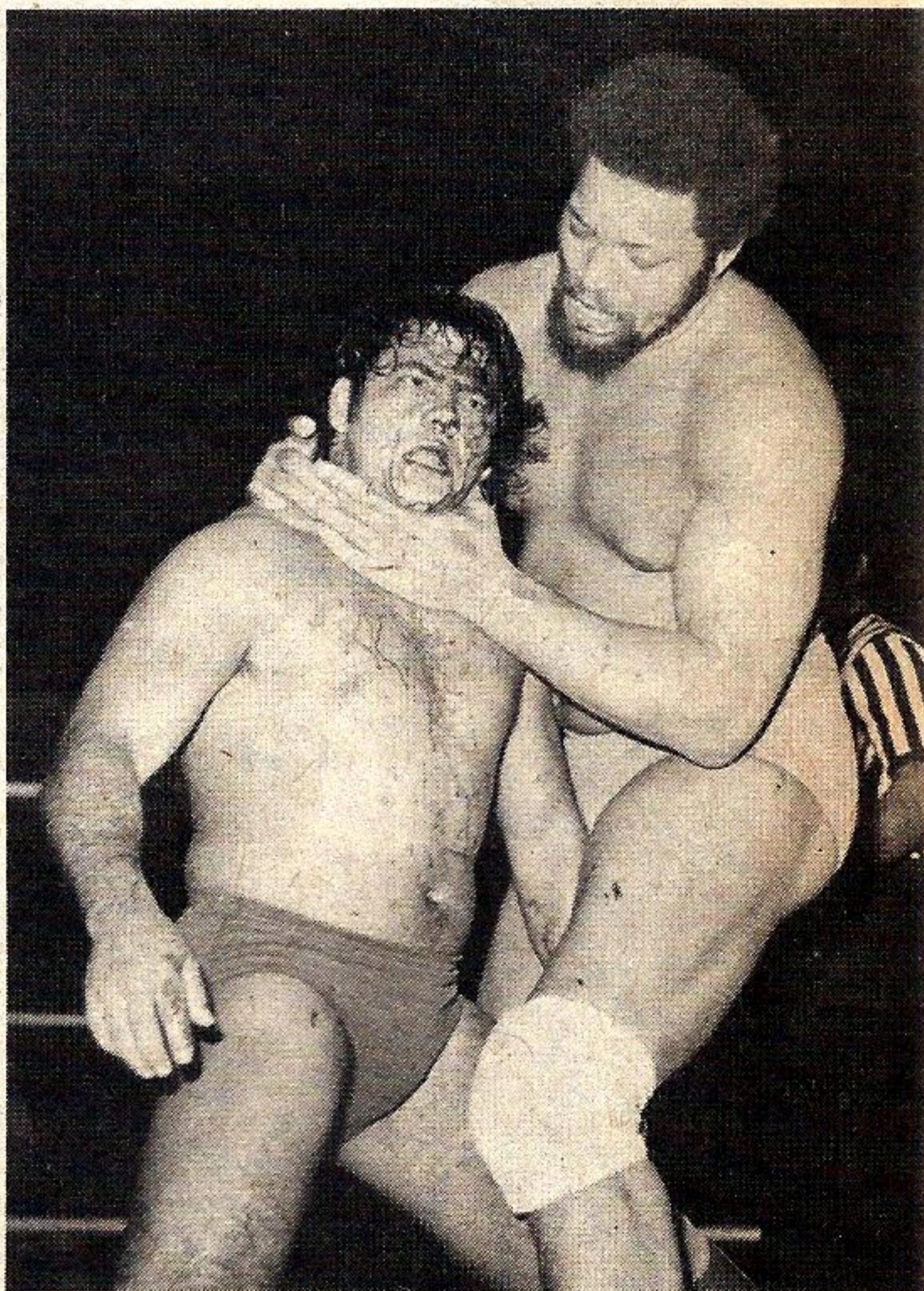
THE MILLION DOLLAR ROOKIE IS A MILLION DOLLAR

The future is full of promise for Chavo Guerrero. Ernie Ladd wants to break that promise—and the young man's body along with it!

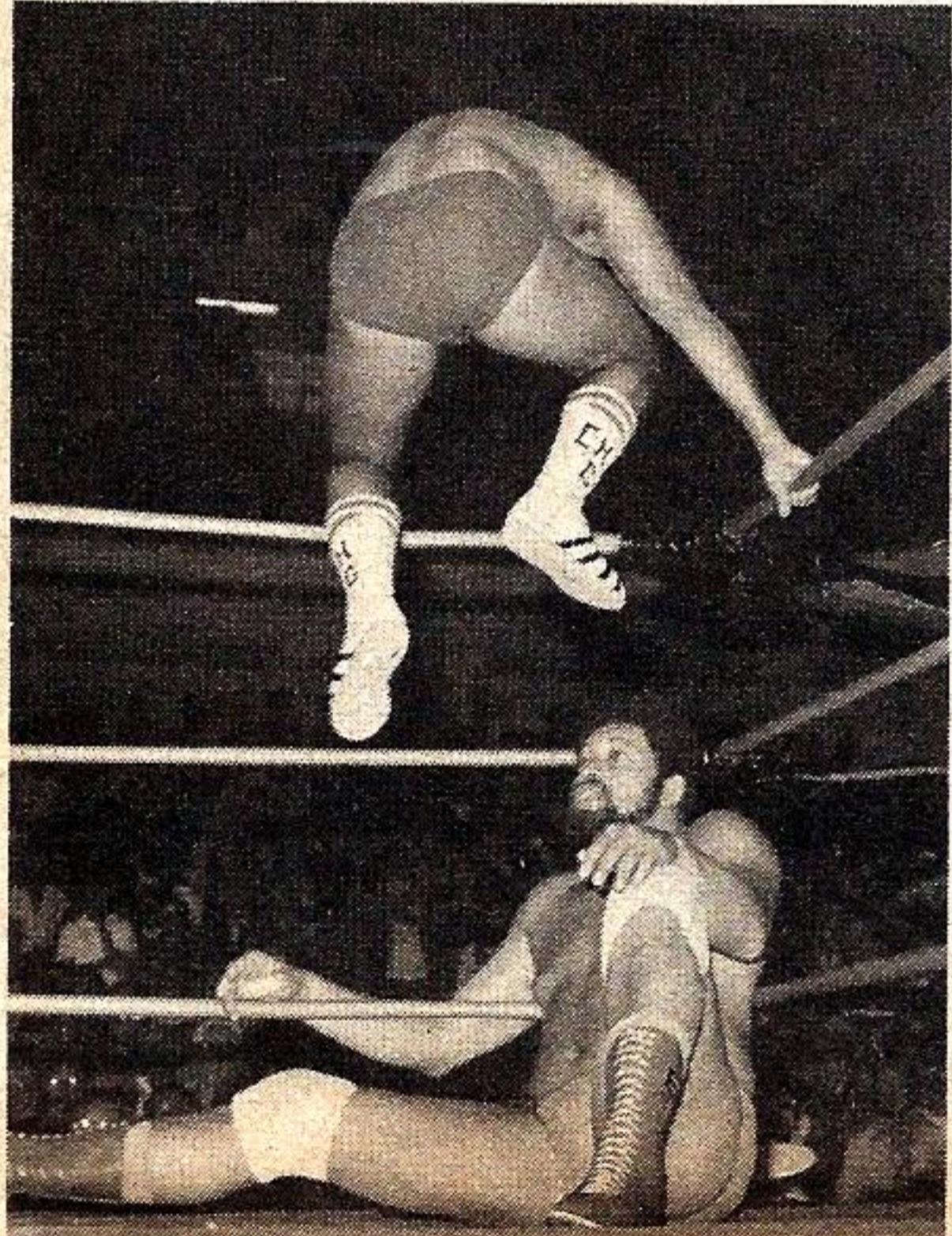
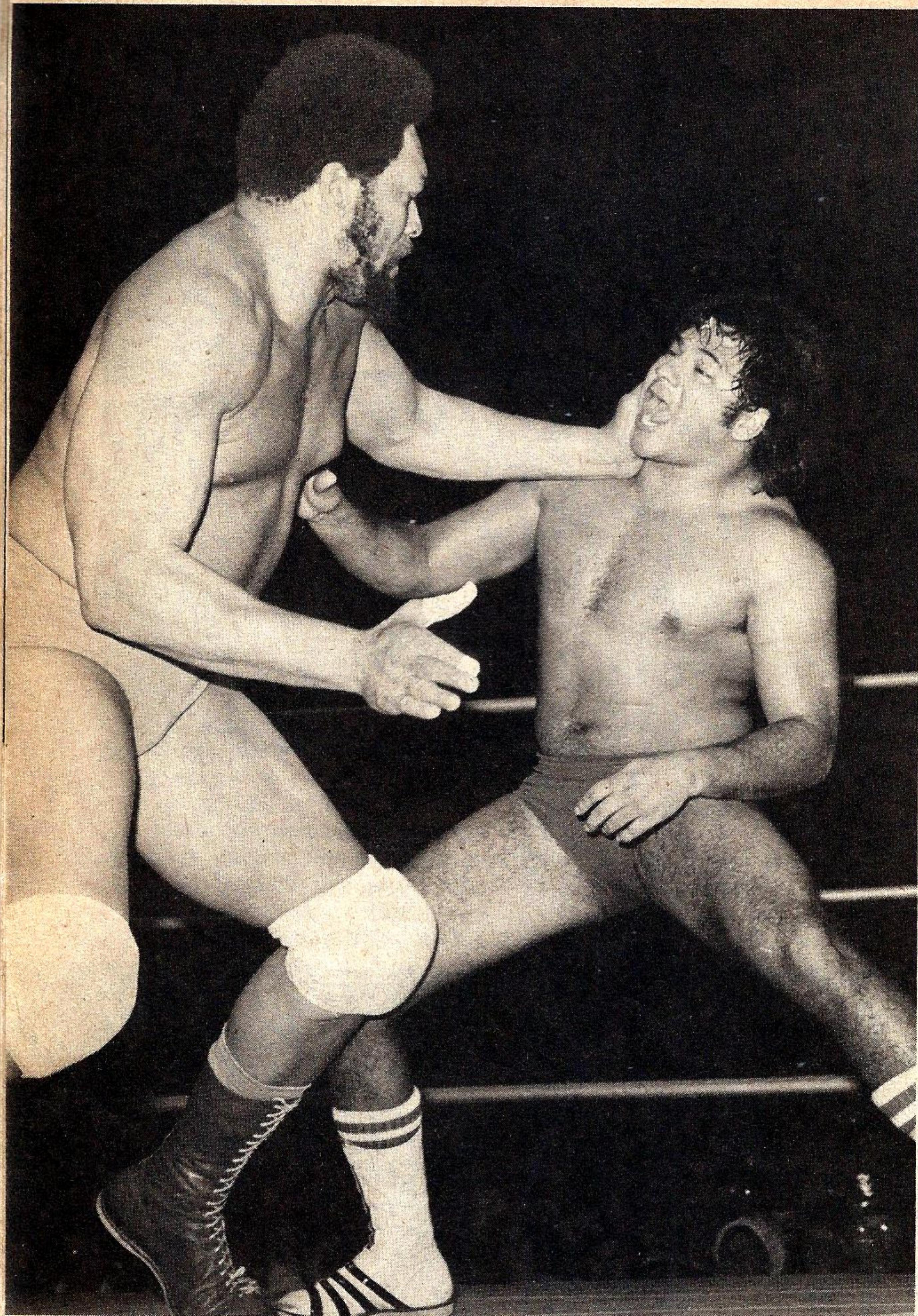
In the opening moments of the match, Ladd uses a towel as a noose to choke Chavo until the young rookie can barely breathe (below). As the match wears on, it begins to resemble a massacre as Guerrero becomes a hideously bloody sacrifice to Ernie Ladd's ugly cruelty.



Below left: Before the arena opens to the public, hours before the match, Ladd inspects the ropes and canvas. In all things, Ernie is the consummate professional. He leaves nothing to chance. Ladd knows every unique feature of the ring before he ever wrestles in it. Below right: Ladd mercilessly throttles his bloody foe until Chavo's feet can barely support his weight. This senselessly ugly beating is just what Ladd intended to do to the young mat star!

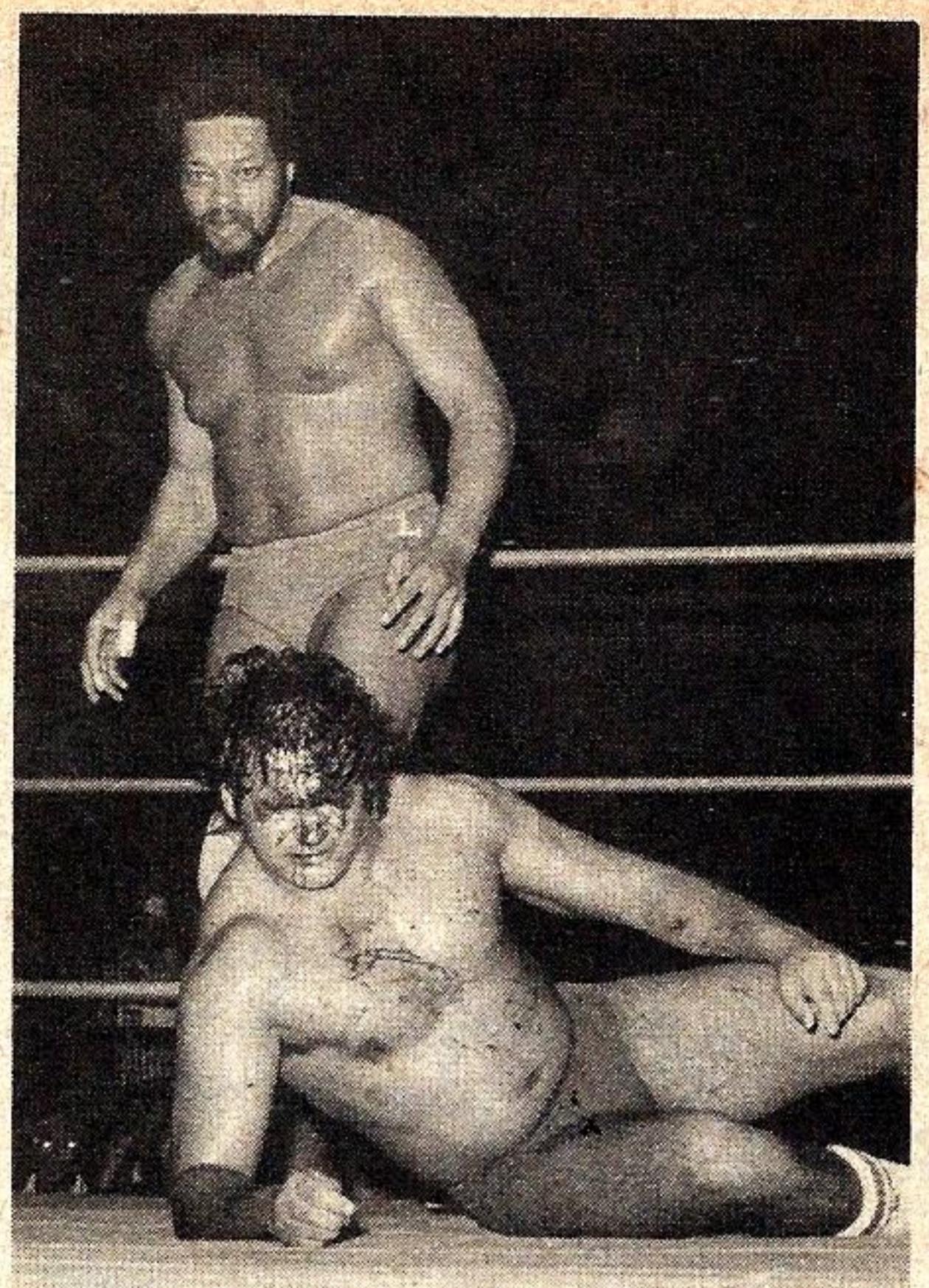


**LAD
TAUGHT
LAR LESSON**



Above: The end is beginning as Ladd mounts the attack which will leave Chavo reduced to a bloody pulp. Left: During the opening moments, Chavo gets Ladd trapped in the corner.

lesson. Grabbing the first thing he found—which happened to be a suitcase—Ernie ran from the dressing room and into the arena. He climbed over the ropes and rushed at Guerrero, who was still receiving the adulation of the crowd. Suddenly the suitcase went crashing over Chavo's head. Guerrero was too stunned by the attack to defend himself.



Stunned and shaken, Guerrero falls to the canvas (above). Soaked in blood, Chavo is at the mercy of Ernie Ladd—a man who displays mercy to no man once inside a wrestling ring!

Ladd continued his relentless assault. Chavo did the only thing he could do—he ran out of the ring and back to his dressing room. But later that evening, he swore he would have his revenge on Ernie Ladd.

Meanwhile, Ladd felt he had only begun to teach Chavo his "lesson." He had a whole set of plans for the million dollar rookie.

After the contracts for the match were signed, Ladd began to prepare himself for this special battle. He trained especially hard. By the night of the match, he was ready for Chavo.

Guerrero entered the arena first. The fans went wild, cheering the million dollar rookie for a full five minutes. Ladd heard the crowd and swore this would be the last time the fans would cheer for Chavo.

Ladd's entrance was greeted with loud jeering from the Los Angeles fans. Ernie had made no secret of his evil intentions for their hero. Therefore, they felt compelled to boo the self-proclaimed king of wrestling. Ernie ignored the noise and walked straight towards the ring. He looked very angry.

The first five minutes of the battle kept the fans on their feet. It started with Ernie delivering a quick punch to Chavo's stomach. The rookie doubled over, but quickly recovered. He stalked Ernie, carefully avoiding the

(Continued on page 54)

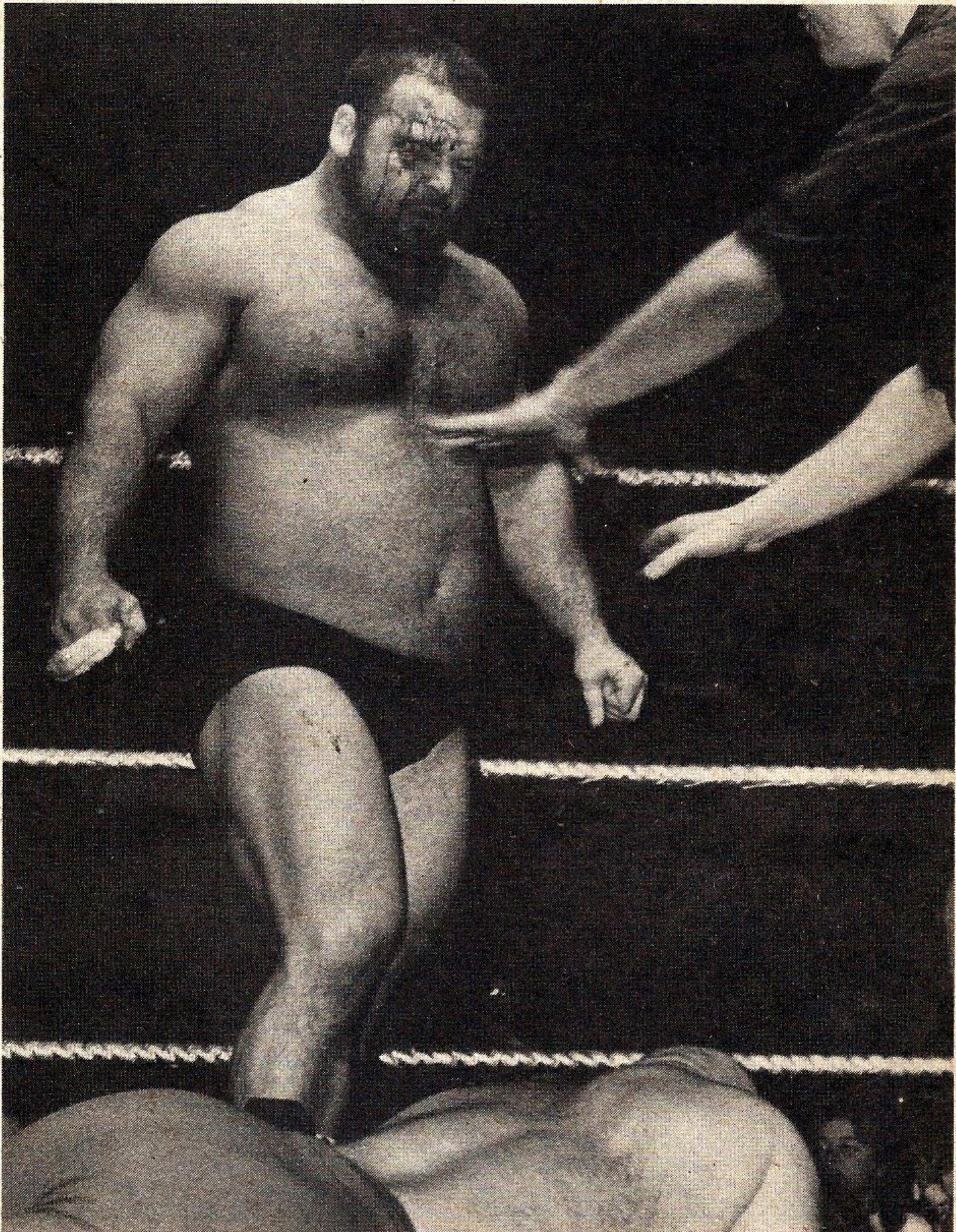
Was the foreign object brought into the ring by Ivan Putski or Bugsy McGraw? The answer may mean humiliation and exile for the popular Polish grappler!

IIVAN PUTSKI sat nervously in the plush chair, moving his body back and forth. He felt strangely uncomfortable wearing a grey, pinstriped suit and a blue and white tie. He was even less at ease because sitting directly across from him was Bugsy McGraw.

Flanked on either side by officials of the World Wide Wrestling Federation, the two wrestlers had come to the federation's headquarters for binding arbitration in the settlement of a dispute. Both wrestlers had called for this meeting with the WWWF. Both men had promised to abide by the decision handed down.

Sitting at the head of the conference table was an executive vice-president of the WWWF. His was to be the final decision in this dispute. He spoke in a quiet but firm voice to the assemblage:

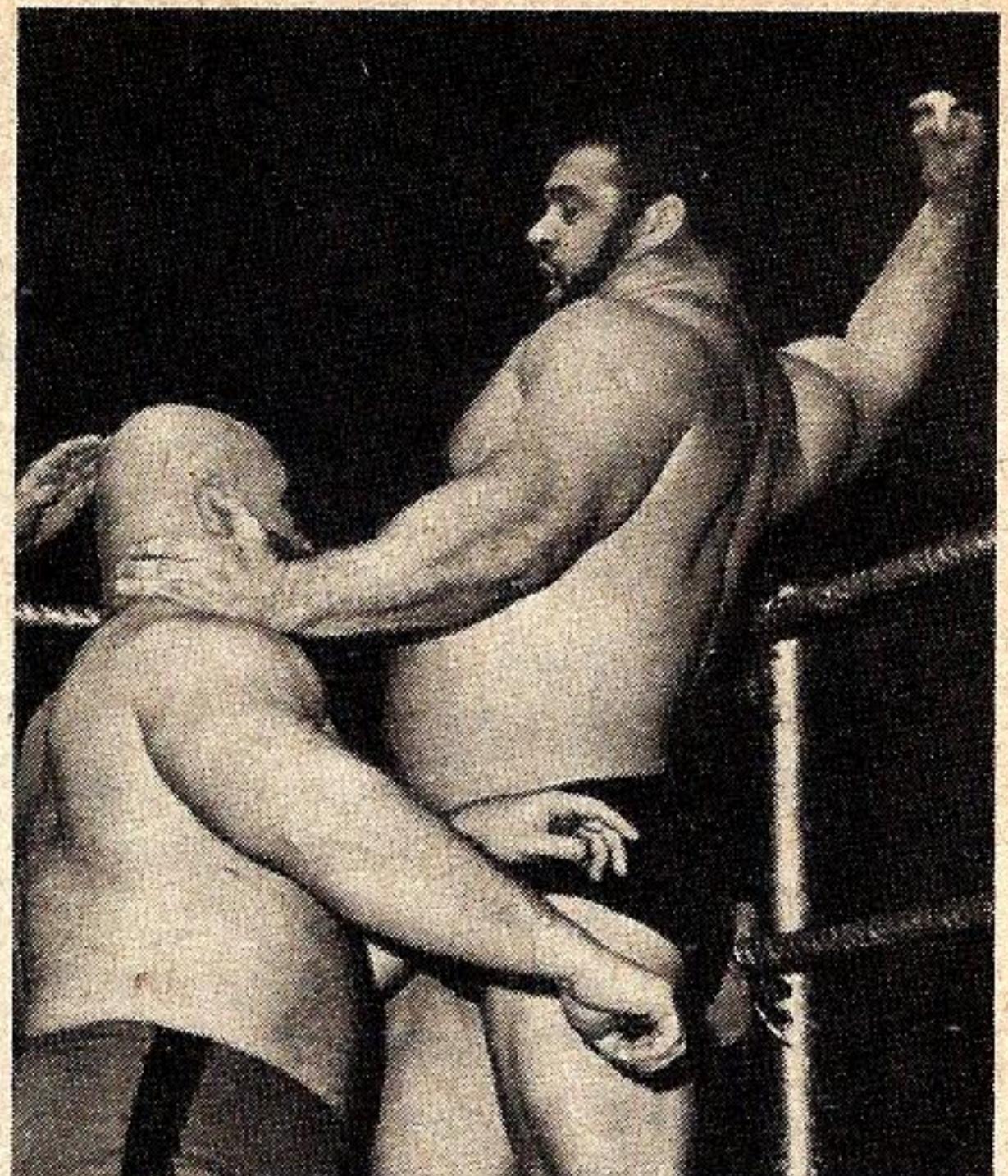
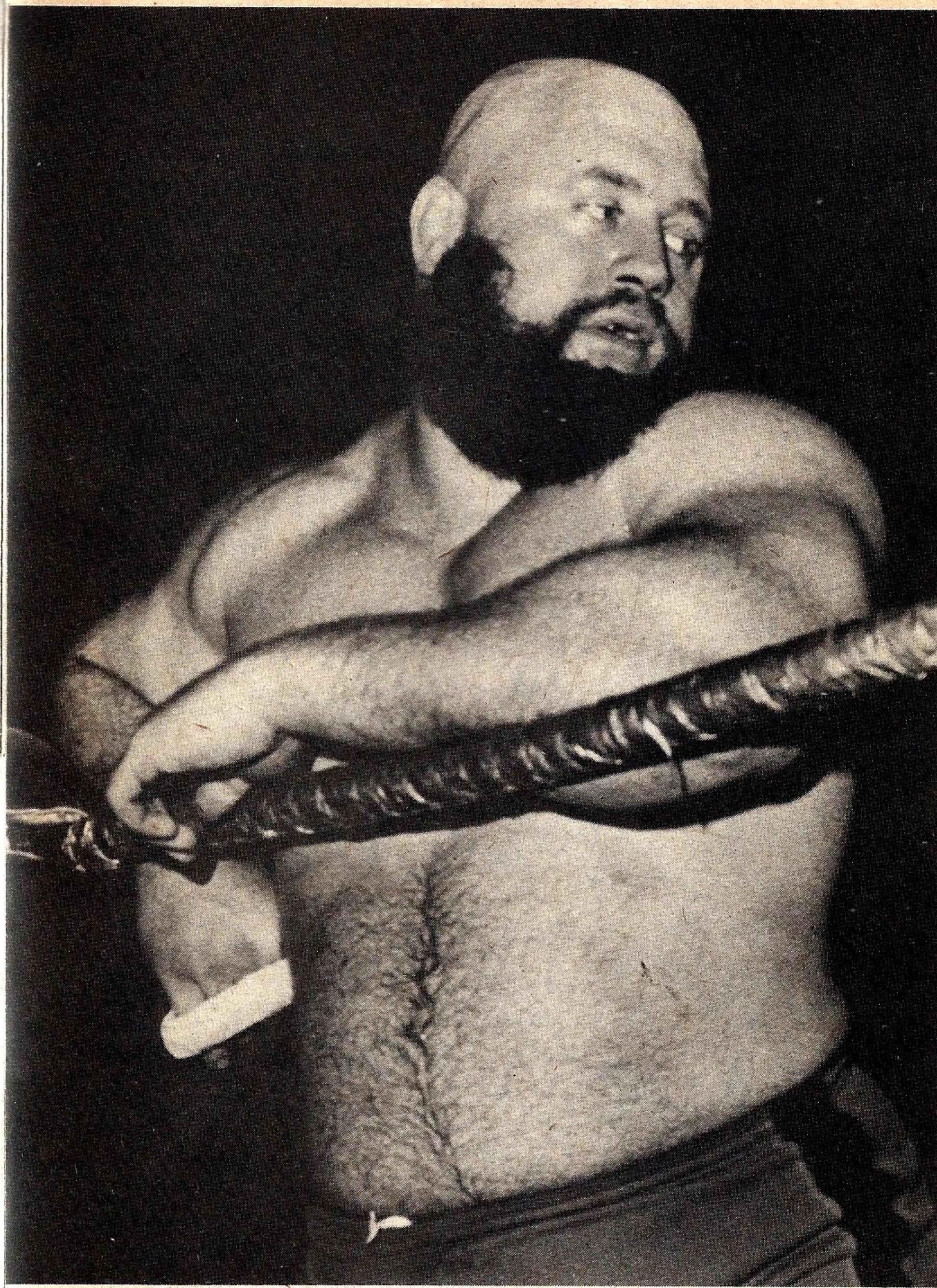
"Gentlemen, we are here to settle a dispute between Ivan Putski and



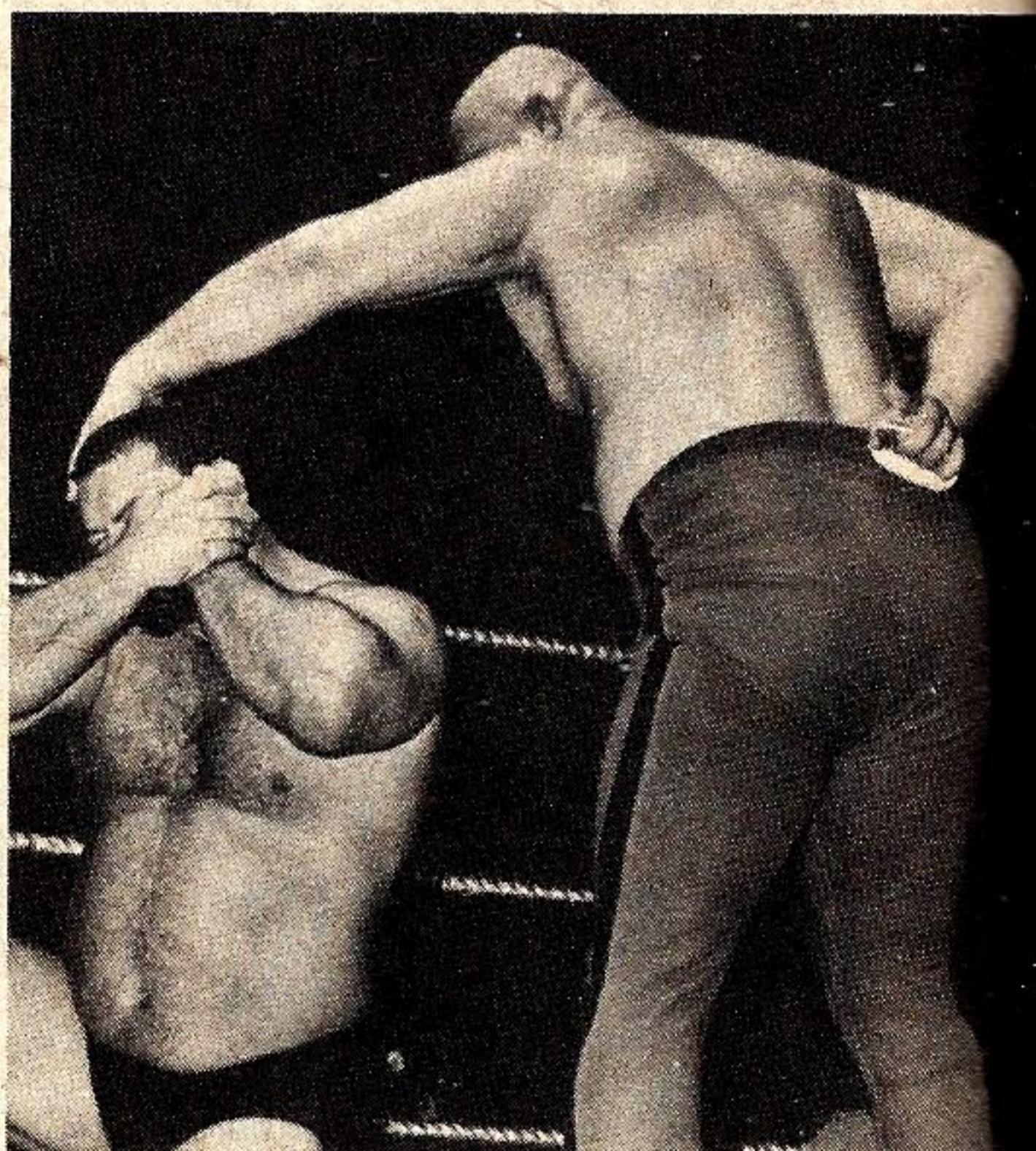
Bugsy McGraw lies on the canvas in a pool of his own blood as Ivan Putski, equally bloody, stands over him holding the foreign object which caused both wounds. Both men contend the other brought it into the ring and is responsible for the mayhem which occurred.

THE COURT CASE THAT CAN DESTROY IVAN PUTSKI

PHOTOS BY
BILL APTER



Above: His fist wrapped in the weapon, Putski pounds away at Bugsy with ruthless abandon. Left: Warily studying the foe across the ring, an armed Bugsy prepares to attack. Below: Keeping the weapon hidden from the referee, McGraw holds the agonized Ivan Putski captive.



Bugsy McGraw. We will determine today three major points: One—Who indeed brought the foreign object into the action. Two—What caused the resulting unnecessary violence: And—three—What will be done to settle this dispute to the satisfaction of both men.

"This hearing does not constitute a formal court of law, but the decision reached here today will be enforced and upheld by the World Wide Wrestling Federation. If either man disregards the decision, he will immediately be banned from wrestling in the federation's territory for a period of not less than one year and not more than five years. My decision will be final.

"Since this is now understood, we

shall proceed with this hearing. Mr. McGraw, I will ask you to speak first."

Bugsy glanced at the official, then looked absently at the ceiling, then looked at his shoes, then stared at Ivan Putski. After two minutes of this mindless eye wandering, he began to speak:

"I don't care about whatever Putski says, I didn't bring the object into the ring—he did! In fact, I think I even saw him hide it in his trunks before the match."

Again Bugsy's eyes began to wander around the room. This time, it took only a minute before he could speak again:

"Putski got mad because I took the object away from him as soon as I saw

it. So he started hitting me. Then he grabbed the object from me and started hitting me with it. All I did was defend myself."

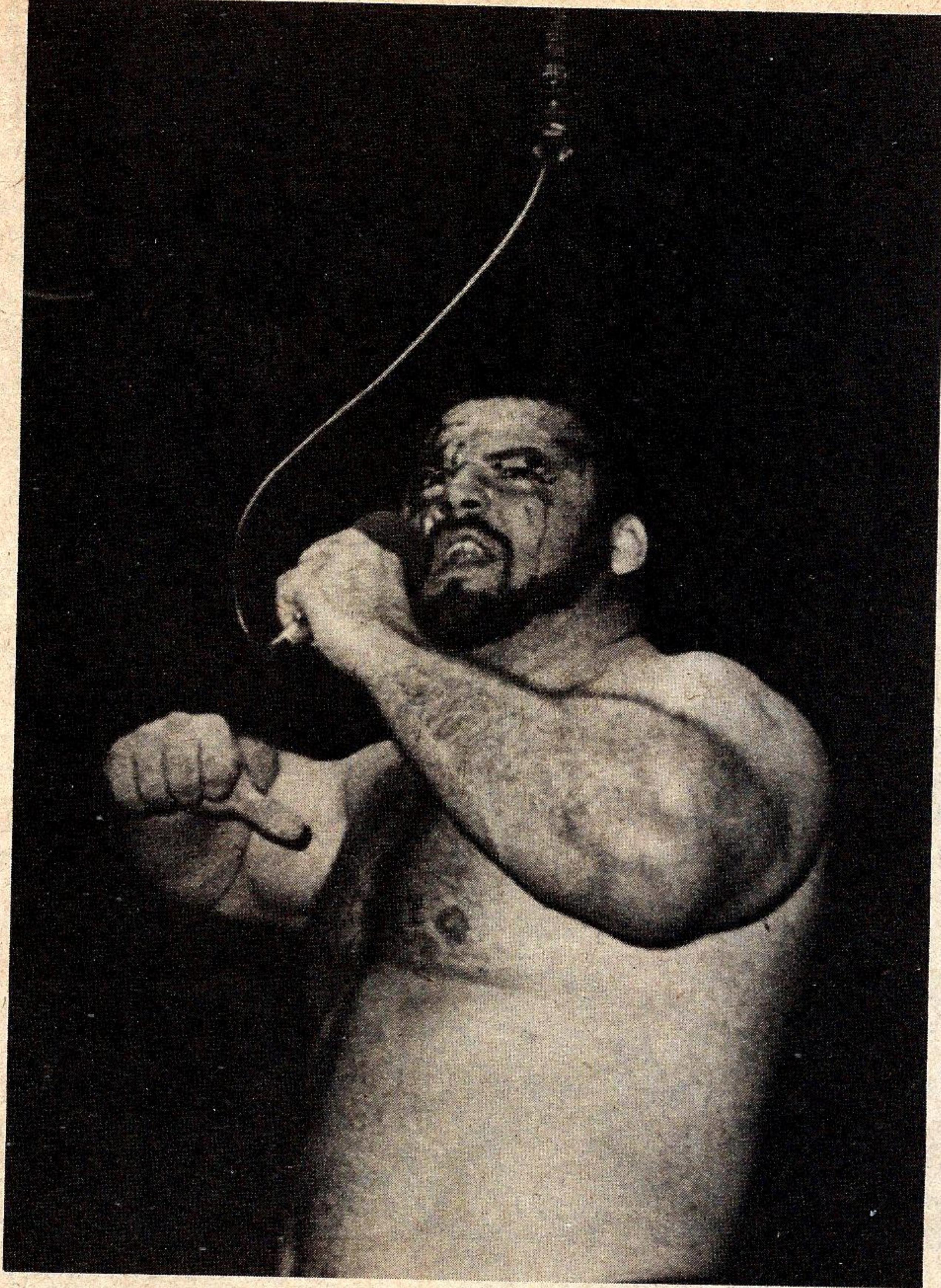
A weird look came into Bugsy's eyes. It was a vacant stare, semi-directed toward the WWWF official. His head was tilted to one side, and a series of unintelligible noises were uttered. After three minutes of this, the executive vice-president spoke:

"Is there anything you would like to add, Mr. McGraw?"

"Uh, no, I don't think so."

"All right then, we shall hear from Mr. Putski now."

Ivan rose dramatically from his chair, filling the entire room with his presence. He stood squarely before the



Grabbing the microphone after the match, ignoring the wounds torn all over his face, the gallant Ivan Putski issues a challenge to Bugsy McGraw, demanding a rematch and promising bloody vengeance!

officials and Bugsy, who in turn was staring vacantly at him. He spoke slowly, carefully, choosing each word deliberately and precisely:

"Never did I bring object into ring. I never, ever did such a thing as that. I am not that kind of wrestler. But Bugsy McGraw is that kind of wrestler. I never wanted to bring this problem before you gentlemen, but what else can Ivan do? Let me tell you what really happen.

"When I battle McGraw, it was very strange. We both have our fans there. McGraw's fans shouted "Sick Power." My fans shouted "Polish Power." In first part of the match, we both were pretty equal.

"Finally, I got control for long time.

I thought fans would cheer for me. But no, many yell for McGraw! Then I saw him take out the weapon from his trunks and start hitting me with it. Some fans still cheered for McGraw.

"That's when Ivan go crazy. I took object from McGraw. Then I saw blood, and it was my own blood! I hit him. I hit him again. Then, we both hit each other. I could not stop hitting McGraw. The next thing I knew, referee disqualified McGraw and Ivan.

"That is my story. That is all Ivan has to say."

The presiding official looked around the room, surveying the faces of both wrestlers, hoping one would betray some small lie told. But he could see no such thing. Finally, he

rose to speak:

"I have listened to both sides of the story and I find myself faced with making a difficult decision: Who is telling the whole story? I wasn't there. I can't be sure. But from what I have heard, I think I can reconstruct the situation:

"Bugsy McGraw brought a foreign object with him into the ring. I feel this is true because of Mr. Putski's testimony, and because I have heard similar complaints regarding Mr. McGraw in the past. Mr. Putski, I feel, is right in this case; it is not *his* wrestling style to bring a foreign object into the ring.

"However, Mr. McGraw can make no such claim. On the basis of his reputation, I must blame Bugsy McGraw for bringing the foreign object into this match."

At this point, Bugsy interrupted the official. "No, I didn't bring the object into the ring. It was Putski, not me." Then he went into one of his vacant stares, saying nothing to anyone.

The official decided to ignore McGraw's outbreak and continue. "The bloody results following the introduction of the foreign object could be blamed on Mr. Putski. It was Ivan Putski who lacked the self-control in this particular situation to ignore the taunts of many of the fans. I feel, gentlemen, it was not the appearance of the foreign object which made Mr. Putski go berserk, it was hearing the rejection of fans. This is why I lay blame for the resulting unnecessary violence on Mr. Putski.

"Deciding what to do in this case is not easy. Both wrestlers have contributed to the problem. As to the solution, I can see only one: There must be a rematch between these two wrestlers.

"The World Wide Wrestling Federation will sign another match between Ivan Putski and Bugsy McGraw. There will be, however, no disciplinary action taken against either wrestler. In addition, there will be no appeal to my verdict.

"Thank you all for your cooperation in this matter. This hearing is closed."

Everyone filed slowly out of the conference room, relieved the ordeal was completed. Even Bugsy McGraw and Ivan Putski were happy, though both were silently swearing to themselves they would have their revenge in the rematch.

Nevertheless, justice had been served. □

Pride and honor drove Mil Mascaras to make the strangest offer ever heard in a wrestling arena. The only thing stranger was the fans' reaction!

PHOTOS BY BILL APTER



THE MATCH THAT SHAMES MIL MASCARAS

TO A MAN such as Mil Mascaras, being the best at what he does is the only way of life he knows. Whether it be in front of thousands of wrestling fans or in front of a motion picture camera, Mil will only accept the totally perfect from himself; anything less is not only second rate, he feels, but also useless.

In making judgements on his own performance, Mil listens to no one's opinions but his own. As a movie actor, he knows when a scene he has just completed is not quite right. As a wrestler, he knows when a maneuver is not executed perfectly.

When something Mil has done does not meet his own expectations, the masked Mexican wrestler becomes unhappy. He feels he has somehow cheated the people who paid good money to see him. Mil feels he must offer some sort of compensation for his poor showing.

"People pay to see me at my best," explains Mascaras. "They did not come to see me at my second best. If I am less than perfect, I cannot expect them to be satisfied. I cannot make them pay for second best."

Following this philosophy, Mil has strived to always be his best in front of his fans. Usually, he feels he achieves this end.

But, there happened a circumstance in which Mil felt he did not do his best. And as a man true to his principles, Mil wanted to compensate for what he felt was a poor showing. So he did something so extraordinary, it shocked wrestling fans, officials and promoters.

Mil offered the fans their money back.

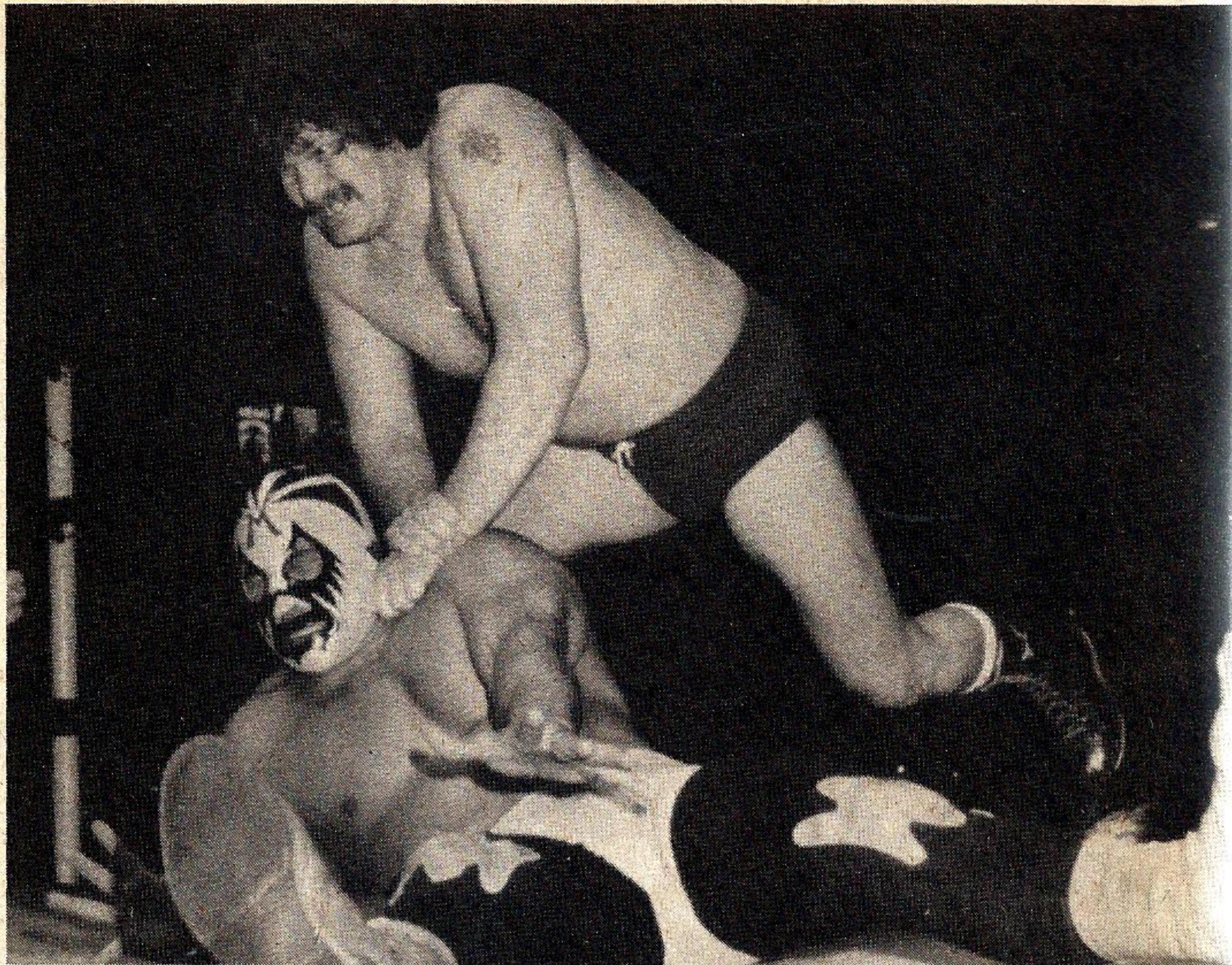
And no one accepted the offer.

This extraordinary event happened the night Mil Mascaras, in an IWA defense, battled Larry Heinime. For some reason, Mil could not call upon all his skills. He was not at his absolute best.

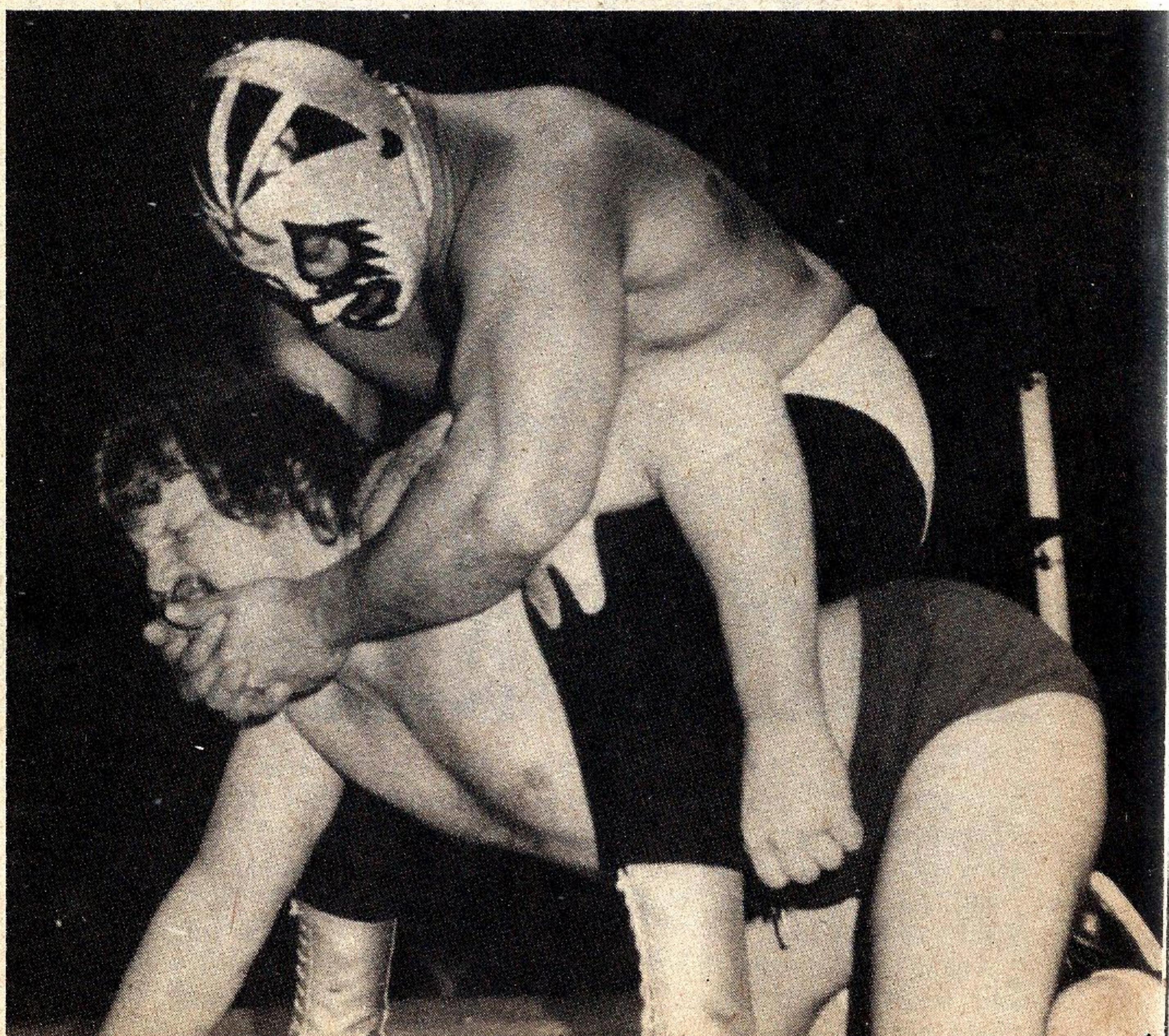
"I just felt wrong that night," Mascaras says. "I knew I should not have wrestled then, but I felt, for some reason, I had to go on. My professional pride demanded it."

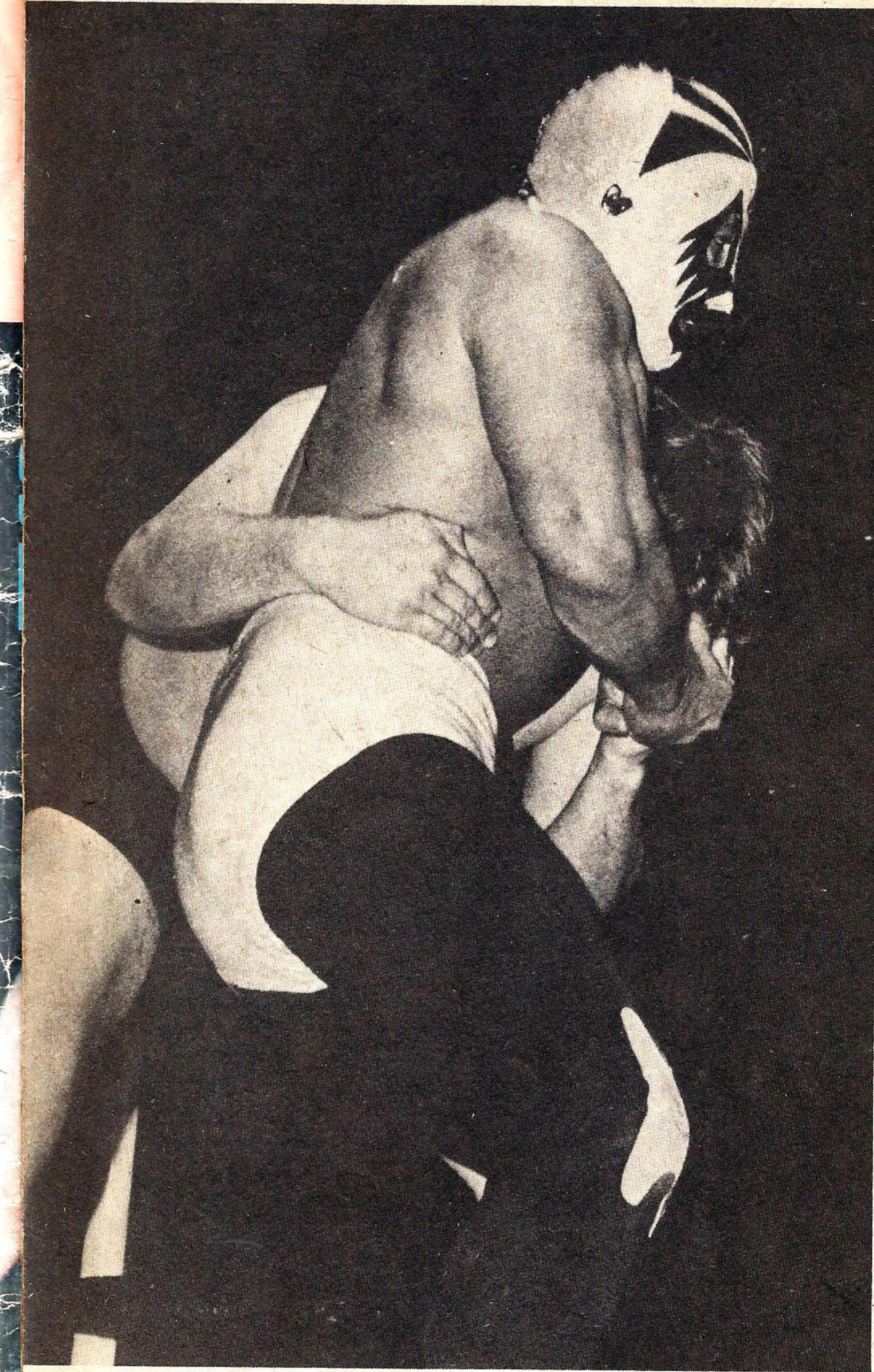
"So I went on and wrestled Larry Heinime. And I made a mistake no wrestler should make: I did not do my best at all times. I was not perfect. I just did not give an all-out effort."

"The moment a man steps into the wrestling arena, he must set aside any problems and just concentrate on wrestling. I have always done this in the past. I have never had an off night. This was the first time."



Above: Mil Mascaras' body tenses in agony as Larry Heinime keeps up the relentless pressure of a nervehold. Mil escaped but felt he never regained the exquisite timing for which he is the most renowned. The fans didn't notice any difference—they considered him superb. Below: Mascaras captures Larry in a riding chinlock, one of the moves Mil uses when he thinks his best maneuvers are less than perfect. Mil's pride constantly demands perfection!



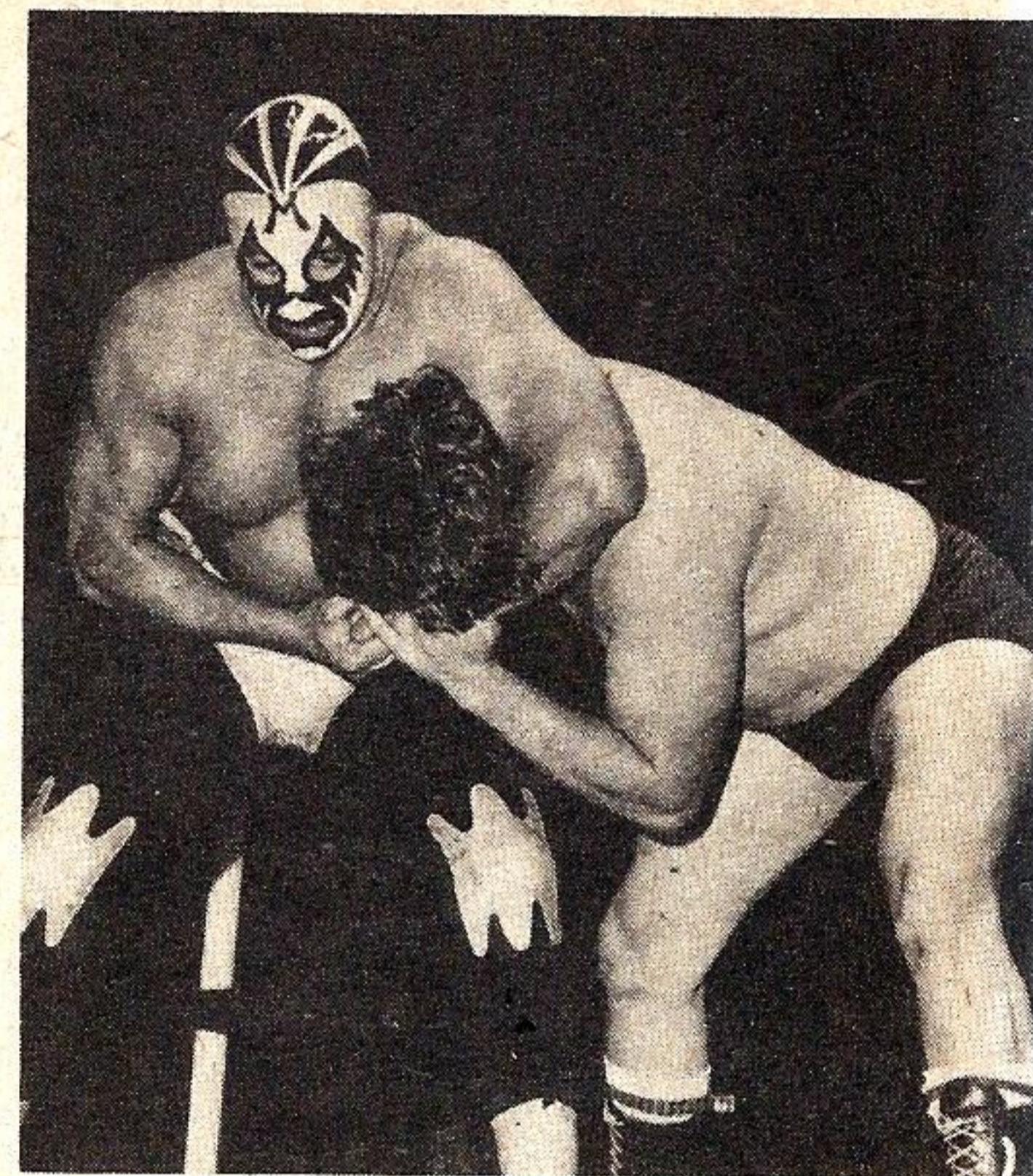


In any case, I felt I could not let my poor showing go without some sort of repayment to the fans. They had paid good money to see me defend my title. I had to do something to make up for what had happened."

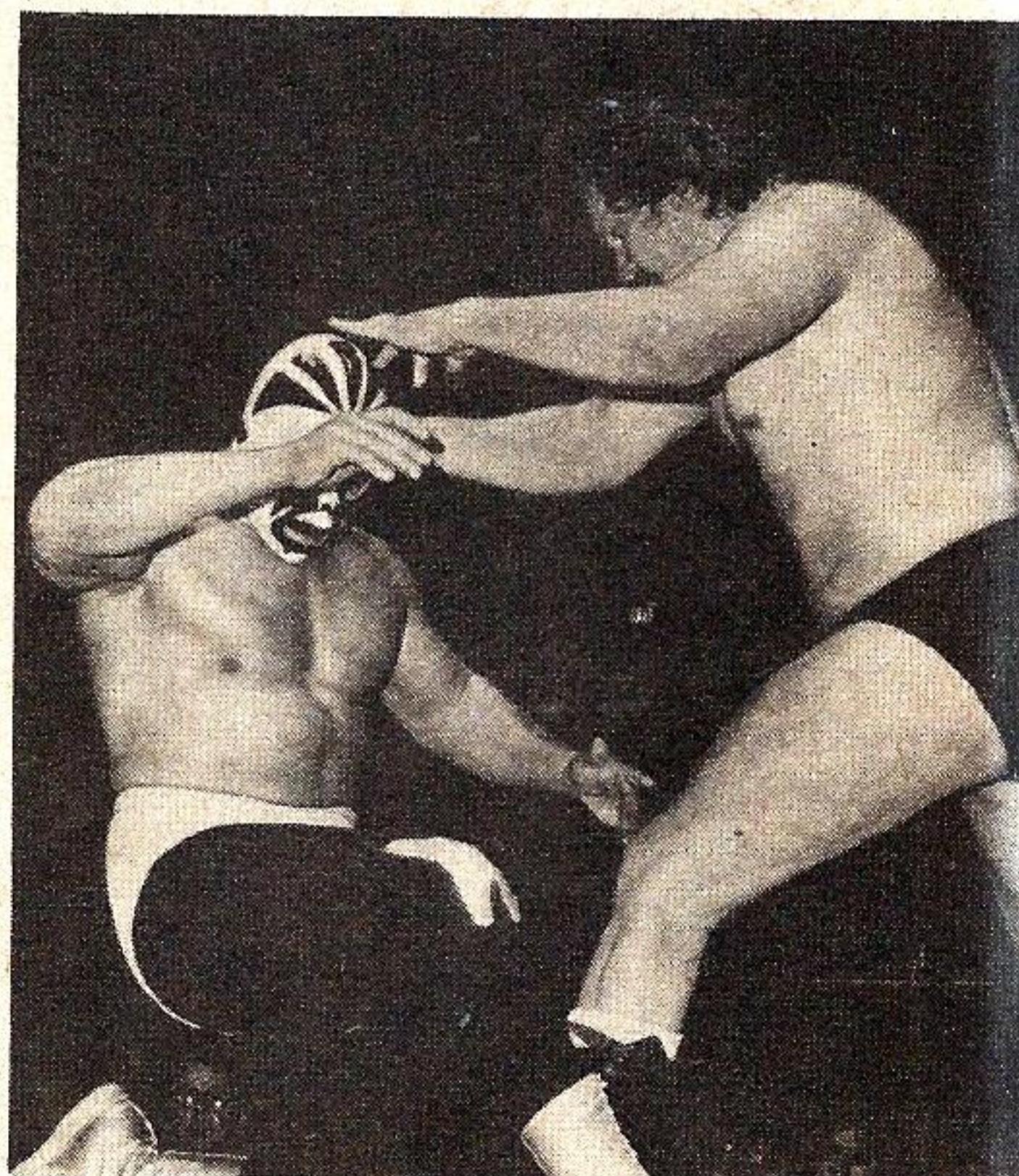
The night of the match between Mil and Heinime, the masked Mexican could not bring himself together. A

huge cheer rose when Mascaras entered the arena. He stepped up to the ring, but his heart just was not with his wrestling. He could not hold his concentration.

The match which followed was a series of frustrations for both men. Mascaras wanted desperately to finish Heinime off quickly and leave the

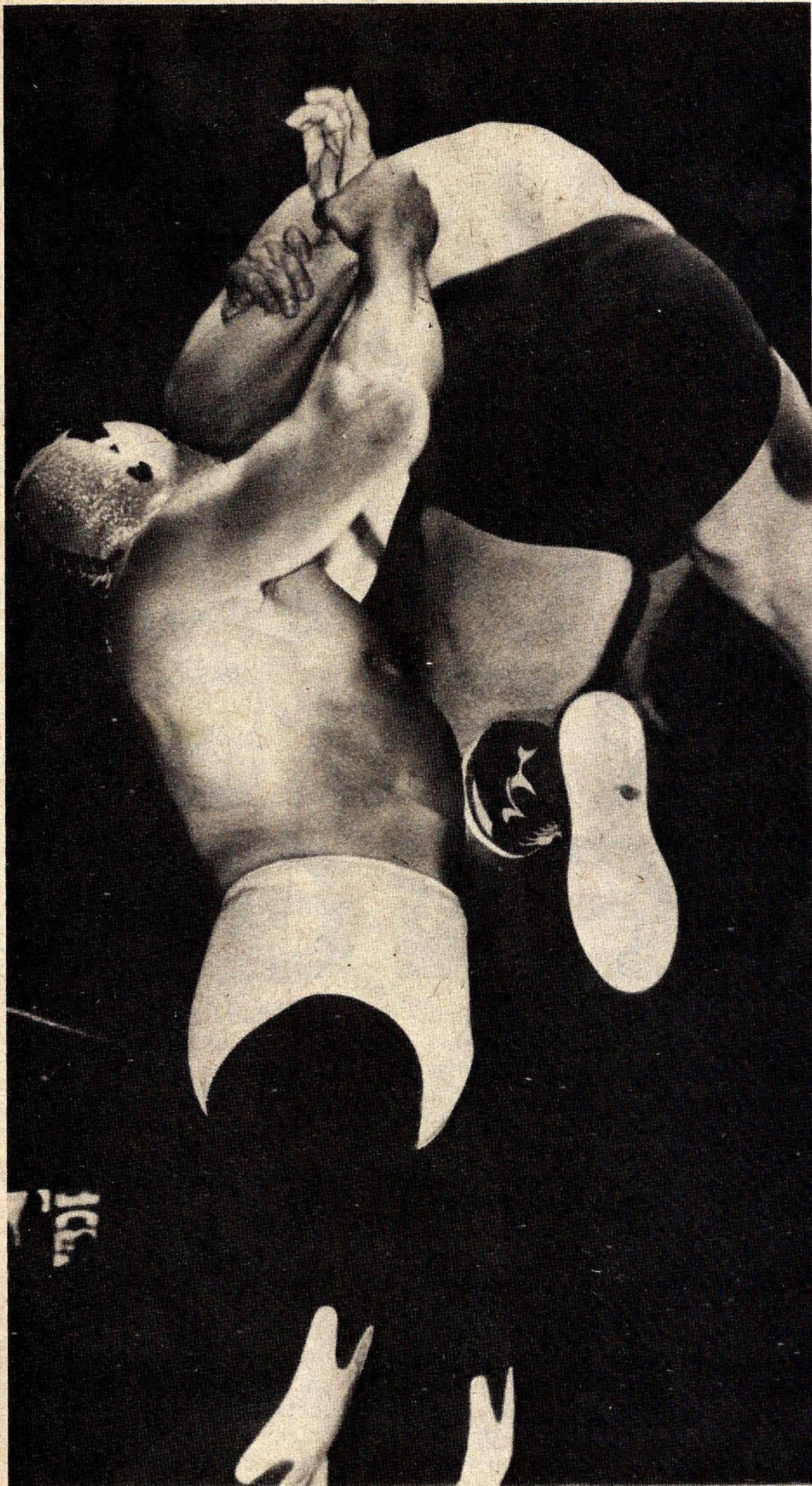


Mascaras traps Heinime in an incredibly powerful headlock (above), making Larry fear his head might explode. With a combination of desperation and courage, Heinime swings around with the full force of his body (left) and then breaks free of the headlock, sending Mil spinning to the mat (below), and allowing Larry to mount an offensive. But Larry's attack is stopped by a perfect flip by Mil (right, opposite page).



arena. Larry wanted to win Mil's title, and he would do almost anything to do so.

Mil relied on his superb defense techniques to carry him through the match. He tried to execute offensive maneuvers, like flying body blocks and dropkicks, but he could not carry these moves off to his satisfaction. He



decided then to let Heinime do most of the attacking.

Each maneuver Larry tried was brilliantly reversed by Mascaras. However, Mil is the type of wrestler who likes to take the offensive. It was a rare occasion that night to see him stick to defensive moves.

The more Mascaras defended

himself, the more frustrated Heinime became. He was quickly wearing himself out trying to conquer the masked wrestler.

Twenty-five minutes into the match, Larry's frustration reached its peak. He found himself exhausted by his efforts to defeat Mil. He had to do something. He saw an opportunity and

he seized it. When Mil was unprepared, Heinime started kicking low and punching Mascaras, hoping this would weaken the Mexican. However, this was not fated to happen.

Heinime's brutal attack caught the attention of the referee. Just as Larry was about to attempt a choke on Mascaras, the referee stepped in and disqualified him. Immediately, the match was awarded to Mascaras.

The crowd started cheering as Mil's hand was raised in victory. But Mil suddenly signaled the spectators to be silent. Then, in a clear voice choked with emotion, he spoke to the crowd:

"Ladies and gentlemen," he began, "I thank you for your cheers, but they are not deserved. I wrestled badly tonight. I have never done this before. I am truly sorry.

"I feel you should not suffer for my bad showing. You all paid good money to see Mil Mascaras at his best. You did not want to see me at my second best. Therefore, if you wish, you may ask for your money back. I feel you deserve a refund.

"I can only promise you I will not let this happen again. I made a bad mistake: I did not come into this arena on top of my skills. I did not do my best. I had an off night. So now, for those of you who wish, you may have your money back."

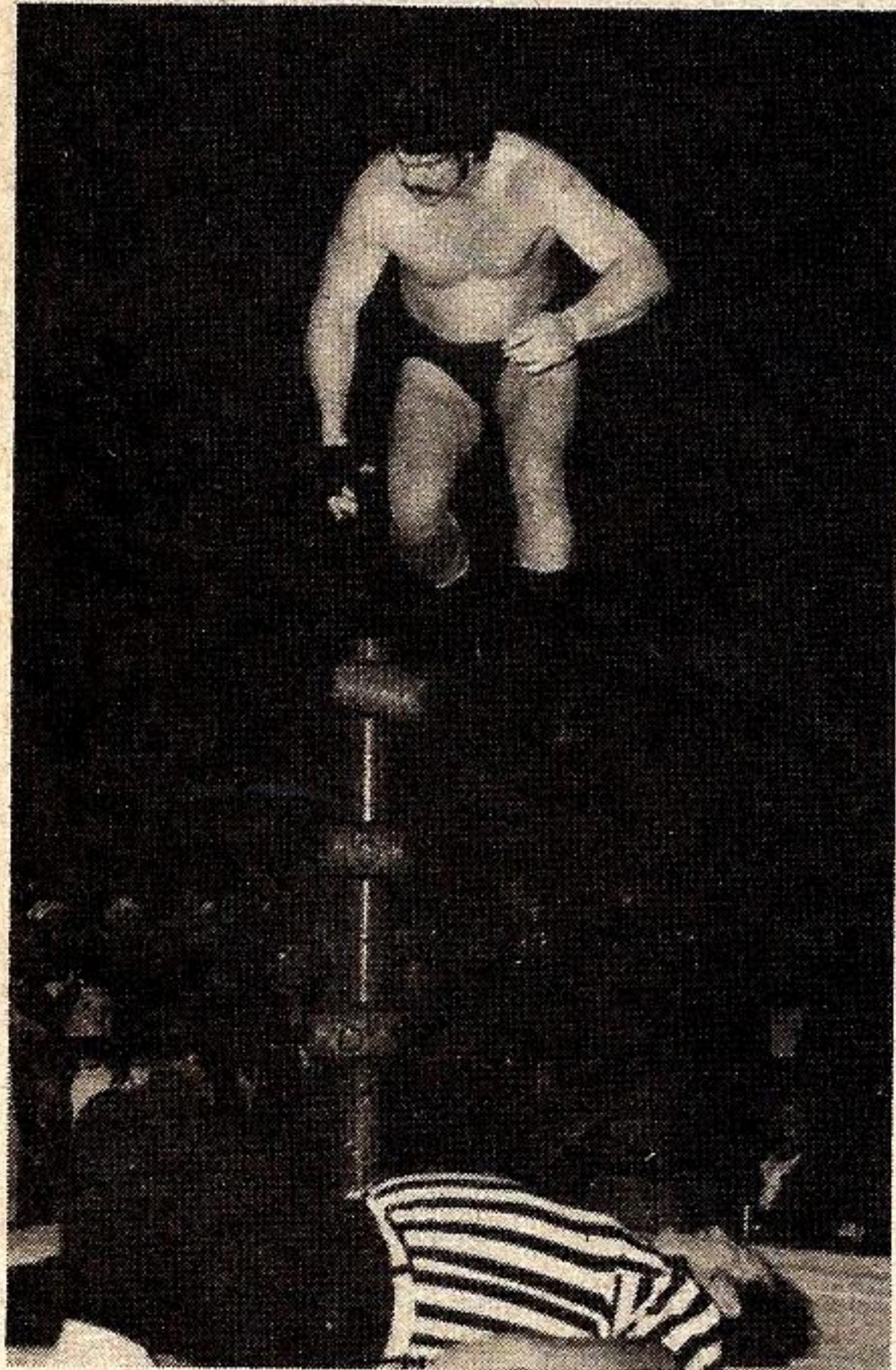
Mil climbed slowly out of the ring and walked back to his dressing room. The arena stayed strangely silent. No one said anything. No one moved from his chair. Meanwhile, the promoter, who had not been prepared for Mil's announcement, rapidly readied his facilities for the rush of people who would surely demand a return of their money.

But there was no line at the box office. No one in the audience that night demanding his money back. There was no one present, except Mascaras himself, who thought the Mexican wrestler had done badly. In fact, everyone thought Mil had done an excellent job in retaining his title. How could they demand their money back when they had received their money's worth?

Mascaras was shocked by the fans' reaction. He felt he had done poorly, yet no one had agreed with him. The box office closed since no one had responded to Mil's offer. The fans—and the wrestling officials—were surprised, yet pleased with Mil Mascaras. There were no refunds that night, only an increase in everyone's admiration for Mil Mascaras. □

PHOTOS BY BILL JANOSIK

THE FAILURE PAUL JONES CAN NEVER AVENGE!



Blackjack Mulligan leaps high off the ropes, intending to land with all his force on the broken and battered referee.

THE REFEREE WAS receiving advice from a group of his colleagues. Each one had some original method of controlling a match in which the notorious Blackjack Mulligan participated.

"You're not being paid to get killed," one man said to the referee. Everyone agreed. "The first time Mulligan tries to do anything to you, even curse you, disqualify him and get the hell out of there. Special police, not referees, are hired to put berserk wrestlers under control."

"Never let Mulligan win any point over you, no matter how small," another instructed. "Once he thinks he can put anything over on you, he's totally uncontrollable. And once that happens, a bazooka won't stop his rampage. But if you lose control, think of any reason to stop the match. Whatever happens, don't stay near that wacko if he starts swinging at you."

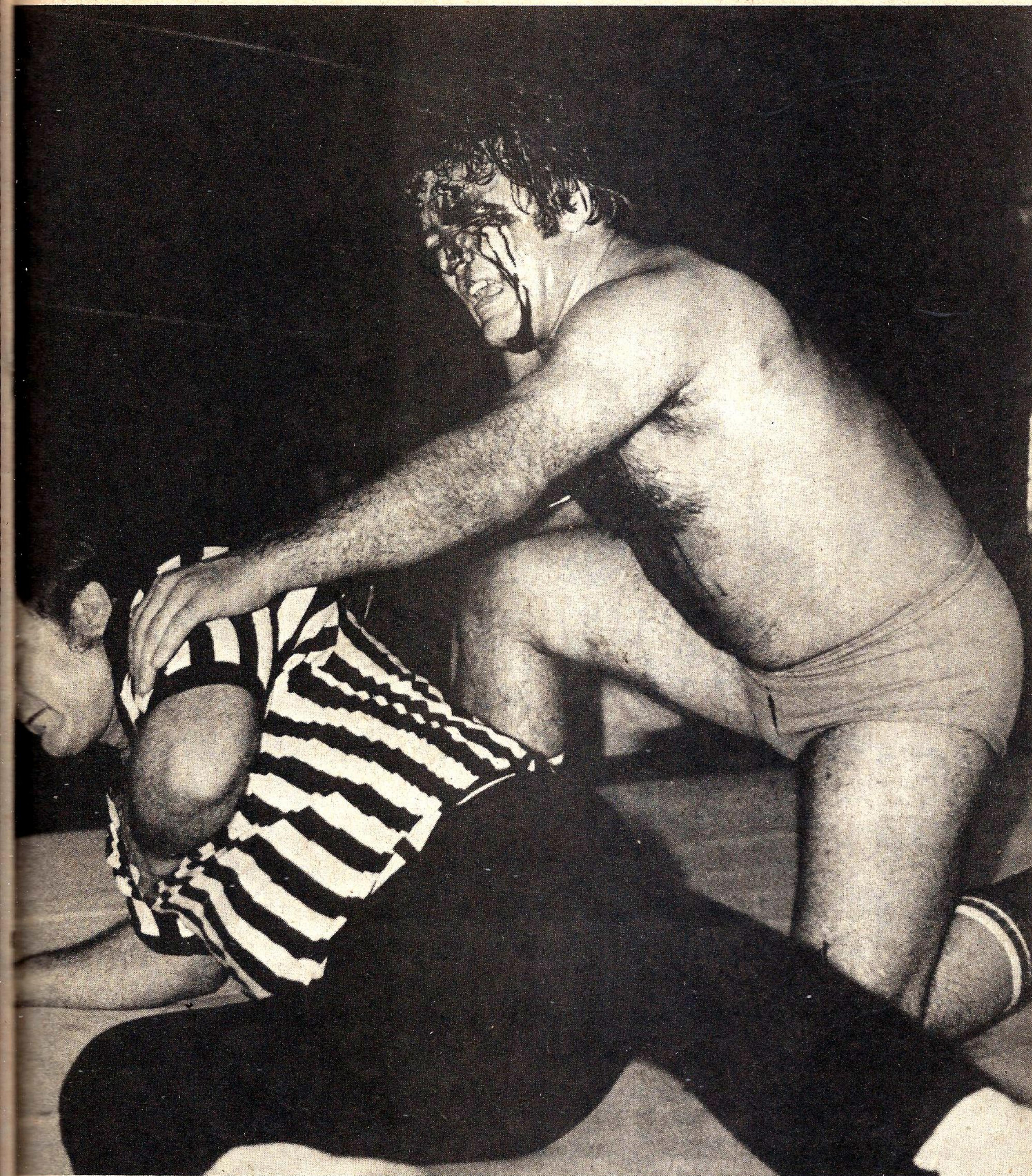
All the referees agreed there was no point in risking getting injured by Mulligan. Each had suffered at

Blackjack's hands and with pain as their only reward. All believe there is no way to maintain any semblance of order when Mulligan wrestles. All a man can do is his best and not be hurt by his failure.

The referee listened to his friends in silence. He believed he had a job to do and would do it to the best of his ability. He also knew if he was in his friends' position, he'd be warning them to take the easiest way out. And he knew they'd ignore him as he was ignoring them. This man would risk being maimed to make it the best match possible.

These conferences always take place when Blackjack Mulligan is scheduled to wrestle. This ruthless grappler has caused more referees sleepless nights than anyone would care to admit. When he wrestles, everyone gives the unlucky official advice. What they're really doing, however, is reassuring him there's no shame in being scared.

This referee knew his job would be made a little easier because Paul



One man stood tall between Paul Jones and total destruction. But when this man needed Paul's help, the wrestler could do nothing but watch in horror!

Jones was to be Mulligan's opponent. With a man of Jones' caliber, Blackjack would be working too hard to care about terrorizing

the referee. And Jones can take care of himself; referees rarely need to save *him* from injury.

The referee was more nervous

than usual when he entered the arena. Few, if any, fans realized he was there. They were busy cheering

(Continued on page 56)

Billy Graham Tells Promoters

“DON’T MATCH ME WITH FLUNKIES AGAIN!”

THE TELEPHONE RECEIVER rested on the promoter's desk. He could hear Superstar Billy Graham screaming over the telephone from the other side of the room. He would pick up the receiver again after Graham had shouted his peace. It would be half an hour before he could put the receiver to his ear without risking deafness.

“What the hell are you wasting my time for?!” Graham asked repeatedly. “Have you no idea at all who I am? I am ‘Superstar!’ Even you can figure out that means I’m the top man in my profession. I deserve a certain caliber

opponent. I’m damned if I have to waste my time on some flunkie! Why don’t you wrestle the punk? He doesn’t deserve anything better.

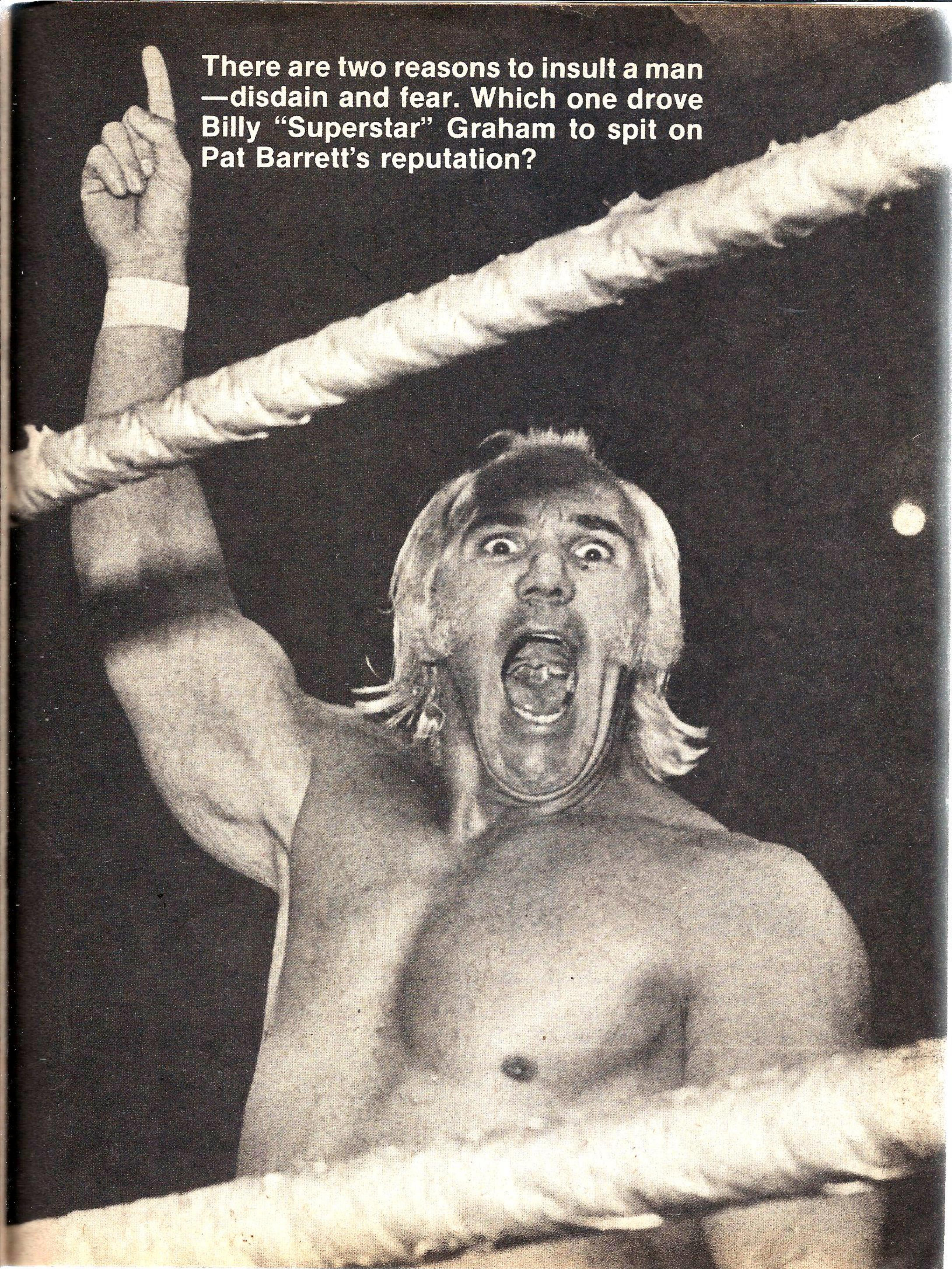
“I’ll tell you what—I’ll let him polish my boots. He can also have my laundry done. But snowballs will freeze in hell before I let him wrestle me!”

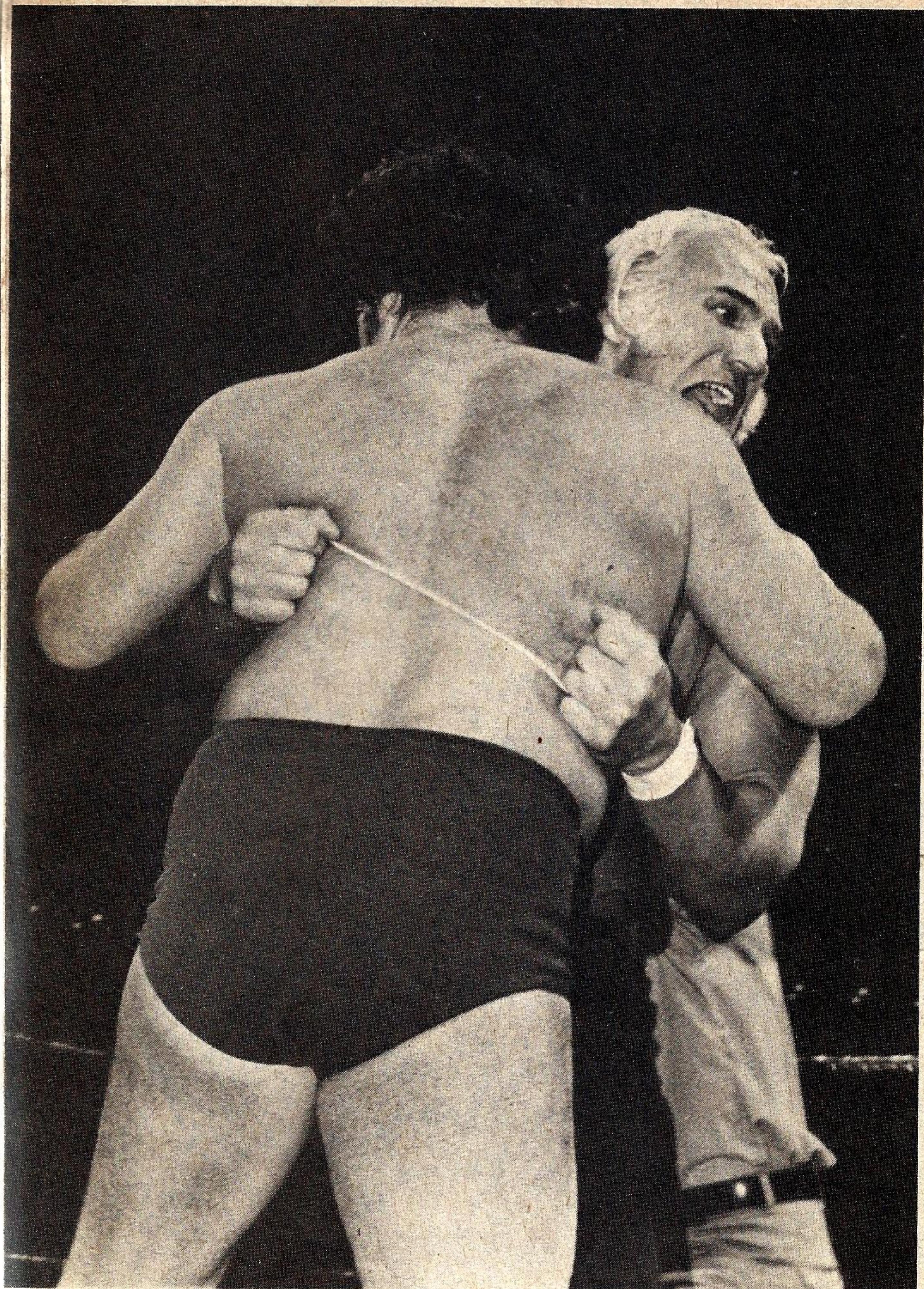
The telephone was silent for about three seconds. The promoter then felt it was safe to pick up the receiver. What he said was said quietly and to the point.

“I have a contract on my desk,

Graham,” the promoter said, “the one you signed. I won’t bother reading the details to you (if you want, read them in your own copy), but it says, in effect, for the huge sum I’m paying you, the choice of opponent is mine. You back out and I’ll have you slapped with an injunction so fast your oversized head will spin. I’ll make it impossible for you to wrestle anywhere in the United States. My very clever lawyer will do everything in his power to drag the case out as long as possible. For the next three years at least, you won’t be able to walk into a United States arena

**There are two reasons to insult a man
—disdain and fear. Which one drove
Billy “Superstar” Graham to spit on
Pat Barrett’s reputation?**





Though Billy claimed not to take Barrett seriously, he goes out of his way to use a rope from the previous tag team match as a weapon against Pat. Graham knows only too well how rope burns will pain and inhibit movement. It's one of the cheap tricks Graham uses to end a match quickly without taking too many risks to his own body.

without first buying a ticket. Do I make myself clear?"

The silence which followed was due to Graham's ego deflating. The "I'll be there" which finally gurgled from his throat was unnecessary. The promoter knew he'd won the moment. Graham had signed the contract three weeks before; the rest had been a diversion. Promoters are used to winning.

Billy Graham is not a man to suffer silently. He insulted his chosen opponent, Pat Barrett, both publicly and privately. It got to the point if Graham was present, Barrett would be verbally humiliated. It was a cheap and ugly display which served to do nothing but reveal Graham's powerlessness over the situation.

"It's not every man who can stand

being called a "punk," "flunkie," "loser," "moron," "worthless bum," and "cretin," without hurling some choice epithets himself. Pat Barrett is a special kind of person. He is also a shrewd man when it comes to his career.

"It's no shame," Barrett explains, "not to be as famous as Billy Graham. His reputation is world-wide and earned with his blood. If I was Billy, I'd sure guard it very jealously.

"Wrestling me, he has nothing to gain and everything to lose. People expect a man of his reputation to beat me. All he can do is live up to expectations. I, on the other hand, can gain international fame by beating Graham. If Graham can't defeat me, people who don't know of me will think Billy is over the hill. That's a hell of a thing to have to overcome, especially when rumors make it a lot worse than it was.

"As for me, all I have to do is make Graham struggle and I win something. The fans will be impressed by anything I do to Graham. If I can put him on the defensive, they'll be talking about it all over the country. I'm risking nothing and standing to gain a great deal. I can't blame Graham for being angry."

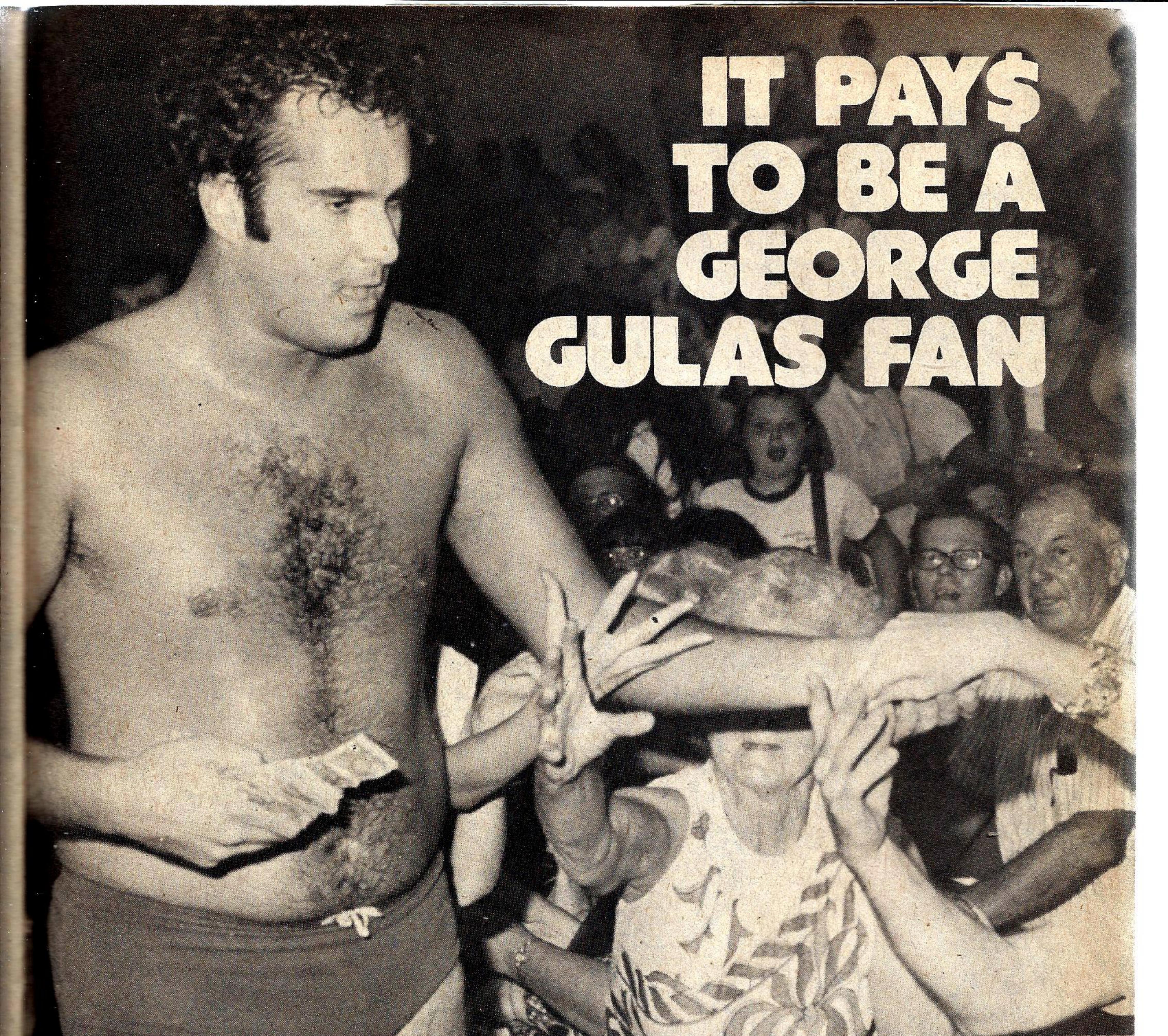
One could blame Graham for the nasty nature of the insults. There's no excuse for any professional athlete to indulge himself in this ugly manner. No human being should have to hear his name reviled as Graham did to Barrett's. However, sportsmanship has never been one of Superstar's qualities.

As if to show his disdain for Barrett, Graham made a point of training lightly for the match. If he knew a journalist was in a bar or nightclub late at night, Billy was sure to be seen there. However, it was also noted Billy never drank anything and left almost immediately after he knew he was seen. In all probability, Graham was training hard, but was pretending indifference. He didn't carouse, but no one saw him train, either.

The night of the match, Graham appeared in top condition. He strutted around the dressing room angrily, cursing his fate and Barrett. He knew only too well this was a match in which he could only lose.

"What the hell do you struggle for," Billy asked, "if they only shaft you when you get to the top? They're out to get me because I'm so popular, such a fine man. They're hoping this clown

(Continued on page 58)



IT PAYS TO BE A GEORGE GULAS FAN

Who says it isn't profitable to be a wrestling fan? You should have been there the night George Gulas beat Mr. Suzuki!

PHOTOS BY SCOTT TEAL

HANDS REACHED OUT eagerly for the dollar bills being distributed through the crowd by George Gulas. Before his task would be completed, 200 people would be one dollar richer.

George enjoyed handing out the money because it had belonged to Mr. Suzuki one hour before. The two men had agreed to bet \$200 on the outcome of their match. The winner would

hand out the money in dollar bills to the crowd. The victor would be a hero; the loser a joke. As might be expected, Suzuki and Gulas tore into each other like jungle animals warring over a feast. One would have thought life, instead of \$200, was at stake.

After 20 minutes Gulas conquered his hated foe. All the months of feuding had been resolved in this unique match. After the match, Suzuki

handed the money to George and tore out of the arena as fast as humanly possible. The fans laughingly thanking him for the money didn't make his exit any less difficult.

So George spent 15 minutes handing dollar bills to 200 lucky fans. Gulas had the time of his life playing Santa Claus to the crowd which had cheered him on to victory.

Afterwards in the dressing room, George exulted, "That had to be the biggest kick in my life. Giving fans money was the greatest way I can imagine to thank them for rooting for me. I think I'll make this deal with everyone I wrestle. It's worth the gamble to have this much fun!" □

STANDO

KNEES BUCKLING FROM the pain, Billy Robinson crumpled to the canvas. Trapped in Terry Funk's headlock, his agony was forcing him into one of the most desperate measures ever taken by a professional wrestler.

Billy did not fall to the mat simply because of his pain. As he fell, he twisted his body in a premeditated fashion. Risking a broken neck, he kicked his legs out and

wound up facing in the opposite direction. This allowed him to reach up and put Funk in a headlock. The only drawback to this maneuver was it didn't free him from Funk's grasp.

So the two men, facing head-to-toe, squeezed each other's head with every ounce of strength at their command. They groaned and gasped for air; their faces turned beet red. Still, neither man would

FF!

Terry Funk and
Billy Robinson are
two great wrestlers,
athletes evenly
matched in skill
and power.
**Courage is the only
way to decide a
match between them!**

PHOTO BY ERIC SOLIE

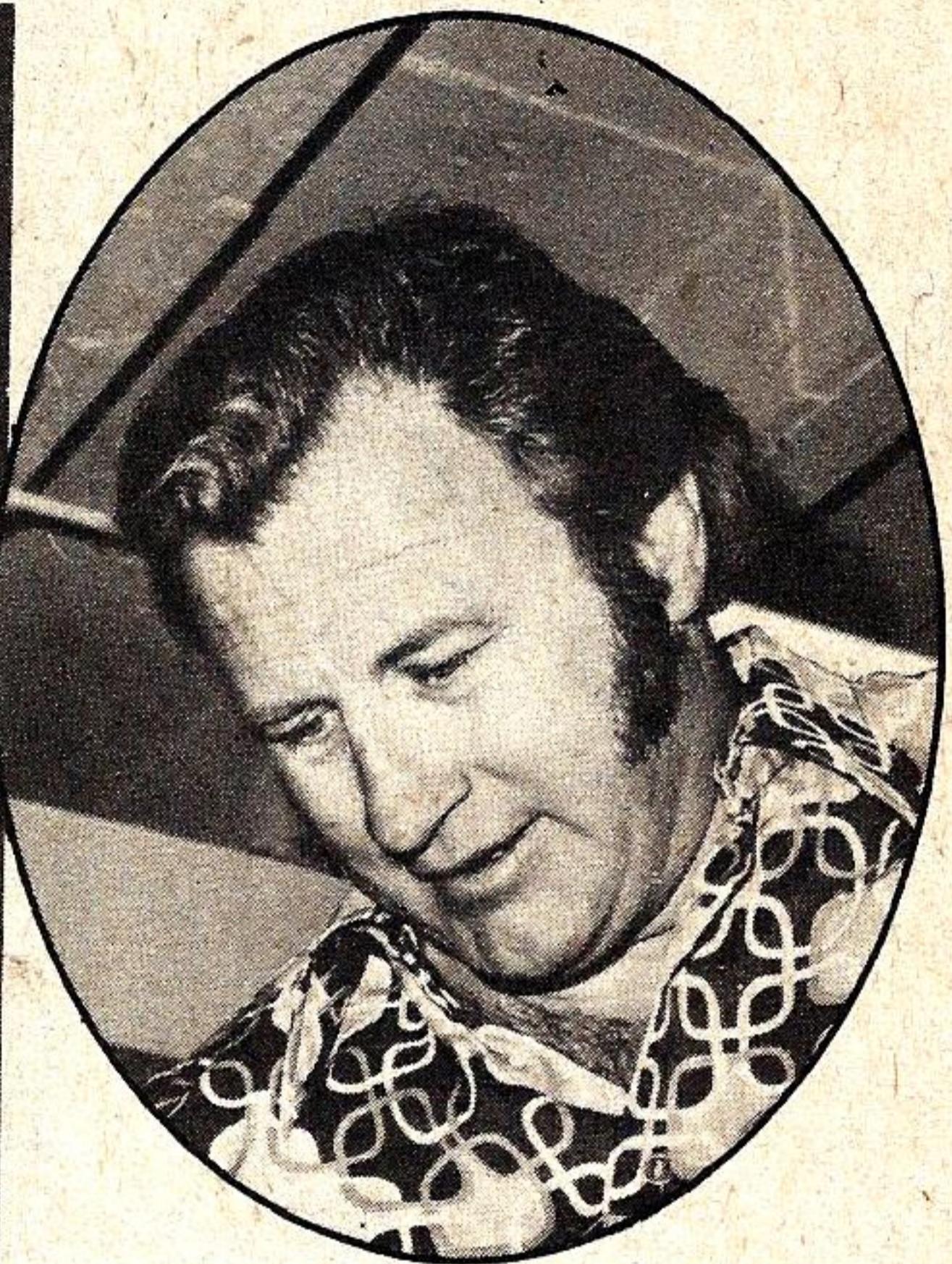
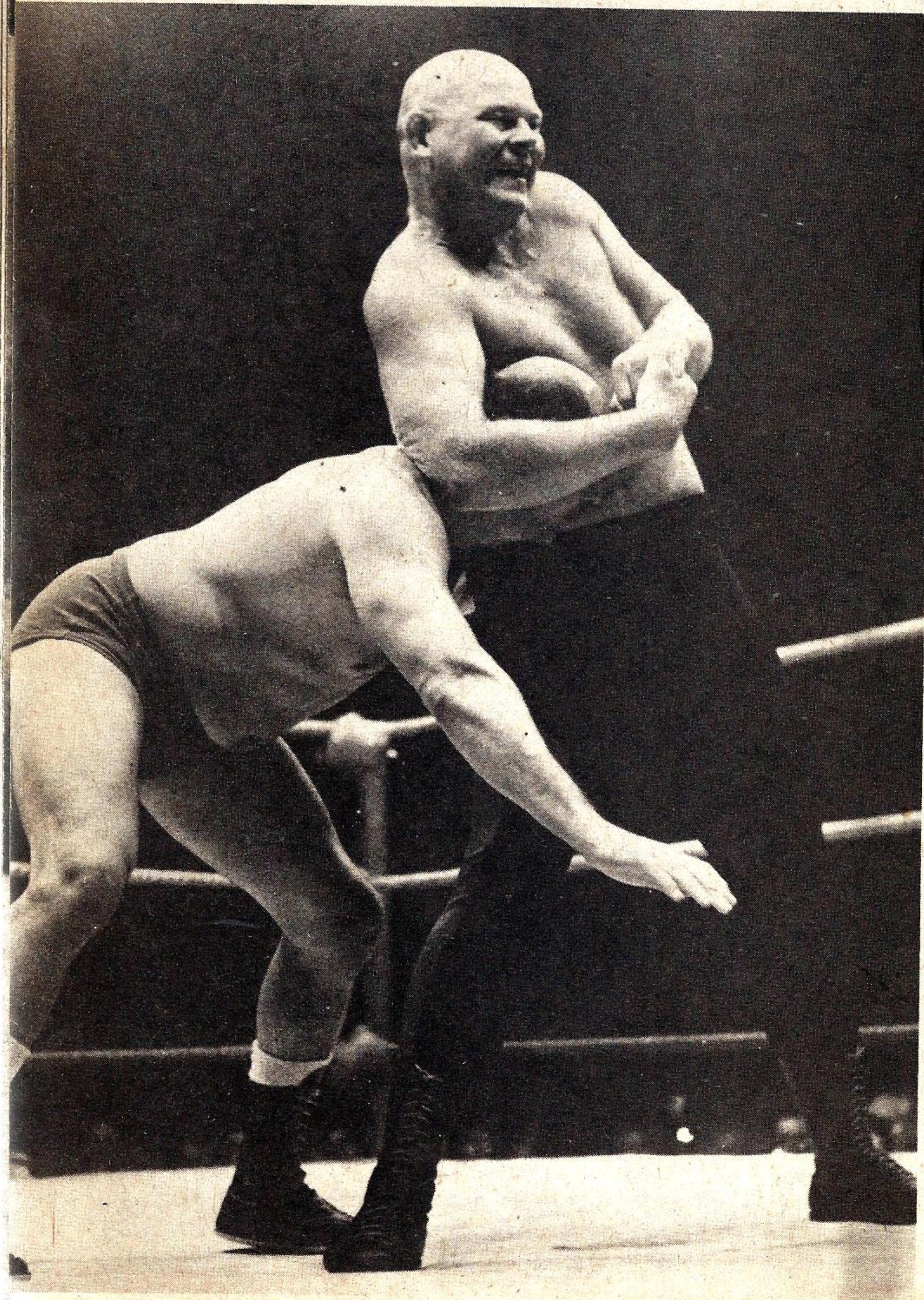
submit. It became apparent the match would be decided by heart, not power.

It seemed like an eternity these two men were locked in this mutually torturous grip. The referee watched with his mouth hanging open, awed by this much absorbed agony. Not a single sound which could be construed as plea for submission was heard.

The match ended the only way possible: the time limit expired. At the sound of the bell, the two men released their holds. Too weak to immediately get on their feet, they rolled on the mat and gasped for air. They had both won a remarkable victory. They had proven courage can conquer pain. It is the greatest achievement towards which any human can aspire. □

NICK
BOCKWINKLE:

"GAGNE'S NO THREAT TO ME ANYMORE!"



Nick Bockwinkle (above) saw a recent match between Verne Gagne and Baron Von Raschke (left). Nick's views on the match will make Gagne do any task to regain the AWA title!

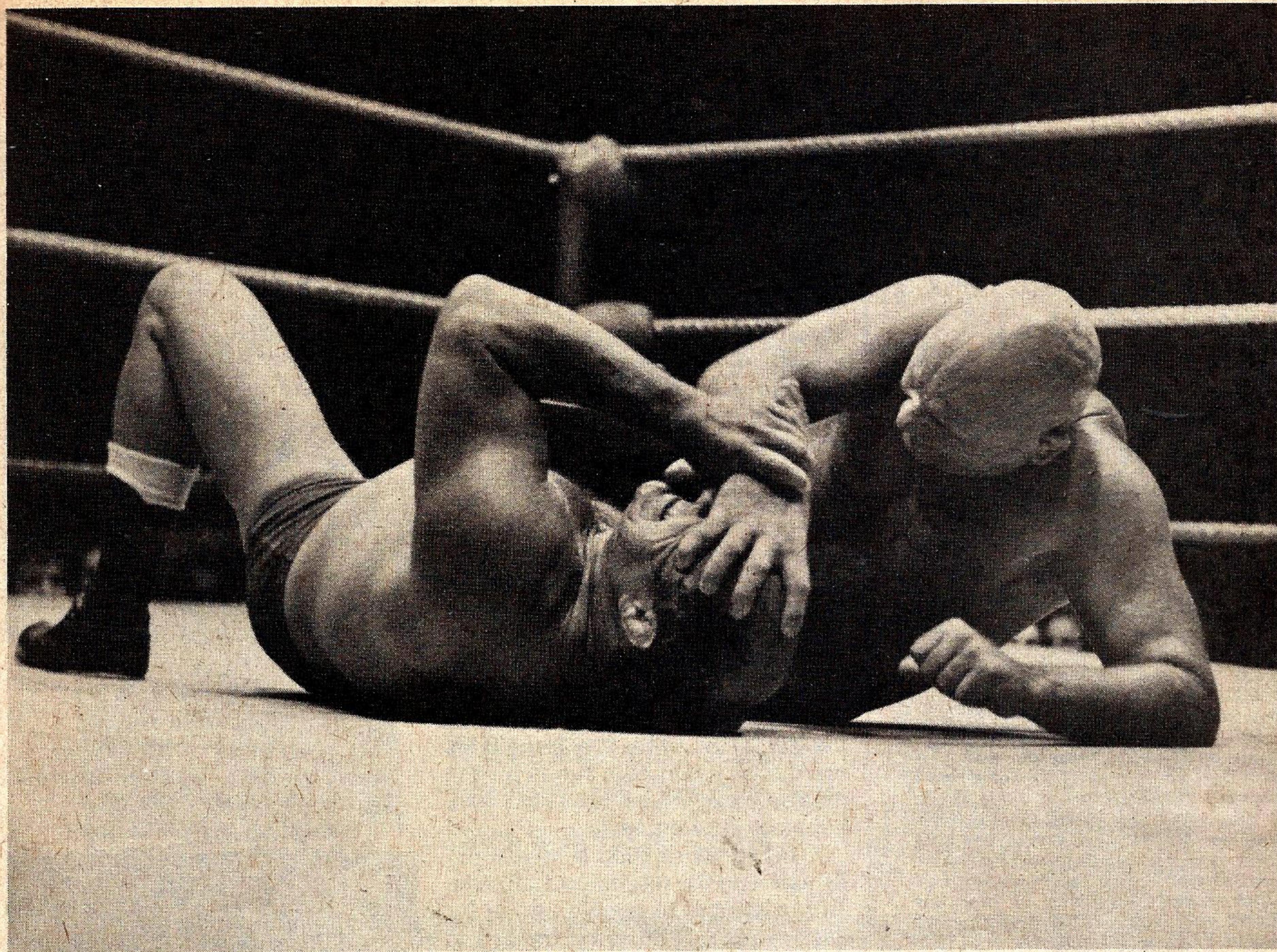
BY NICK BOCKWINKLE

YOU COULD ALMOST feel sorry for Verne Gagne. The man is awful! A disgrace! A joke! Nothing with nothing plus nothing! He is absolutely *no* threat—no threat at all—to my AWA title.

I saw Gagne try to wrestle against Baron Von Raschke. While a man of Von Raschke's caliber can make anyone look bad, only a real loser can look pathetic. And Gagne looked pathetic.

The man was slow, sloppy, and simple. After two minutes, the Baron was toying with him. It was no contest. Hell, it wasn't even a match. It was a massacre with the victor not even straining himself.

First off, I couldn't believe how



**In these pages, Nick Bockwinkle tries to claim
Verne Gagne is finished. This character assas-
sination is guaranteed to make Verne's fans
scream for Bockwinkle's scalp!**

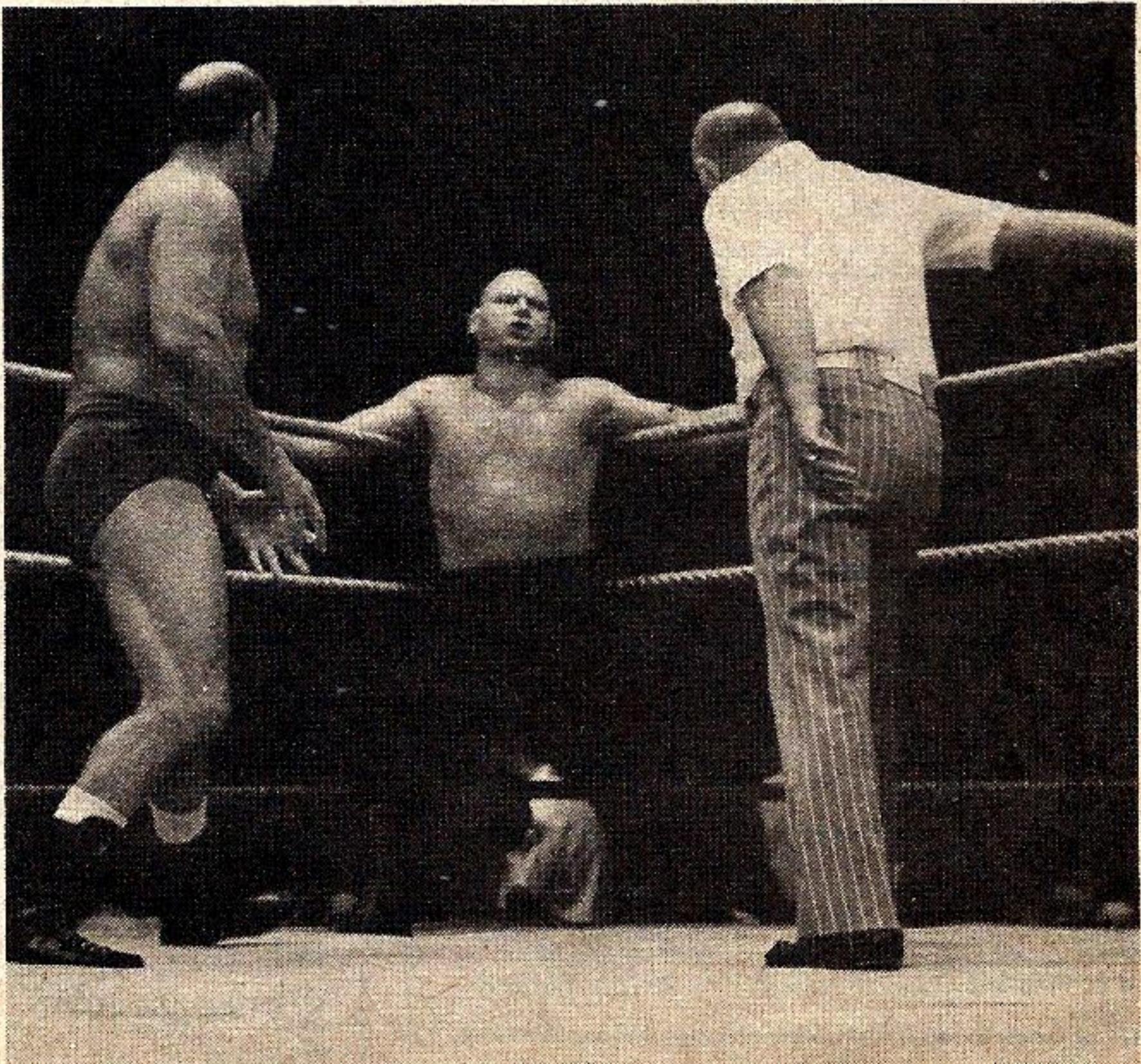
PHOTOS BY BOB SABRE

easily Von Raschke handled Gagne. The ex-champion—and present chump—has no power left. Losing his title to me must have snapped something inside him. The Baron brought Gagne to the ground at will. He didn't even exert himself.

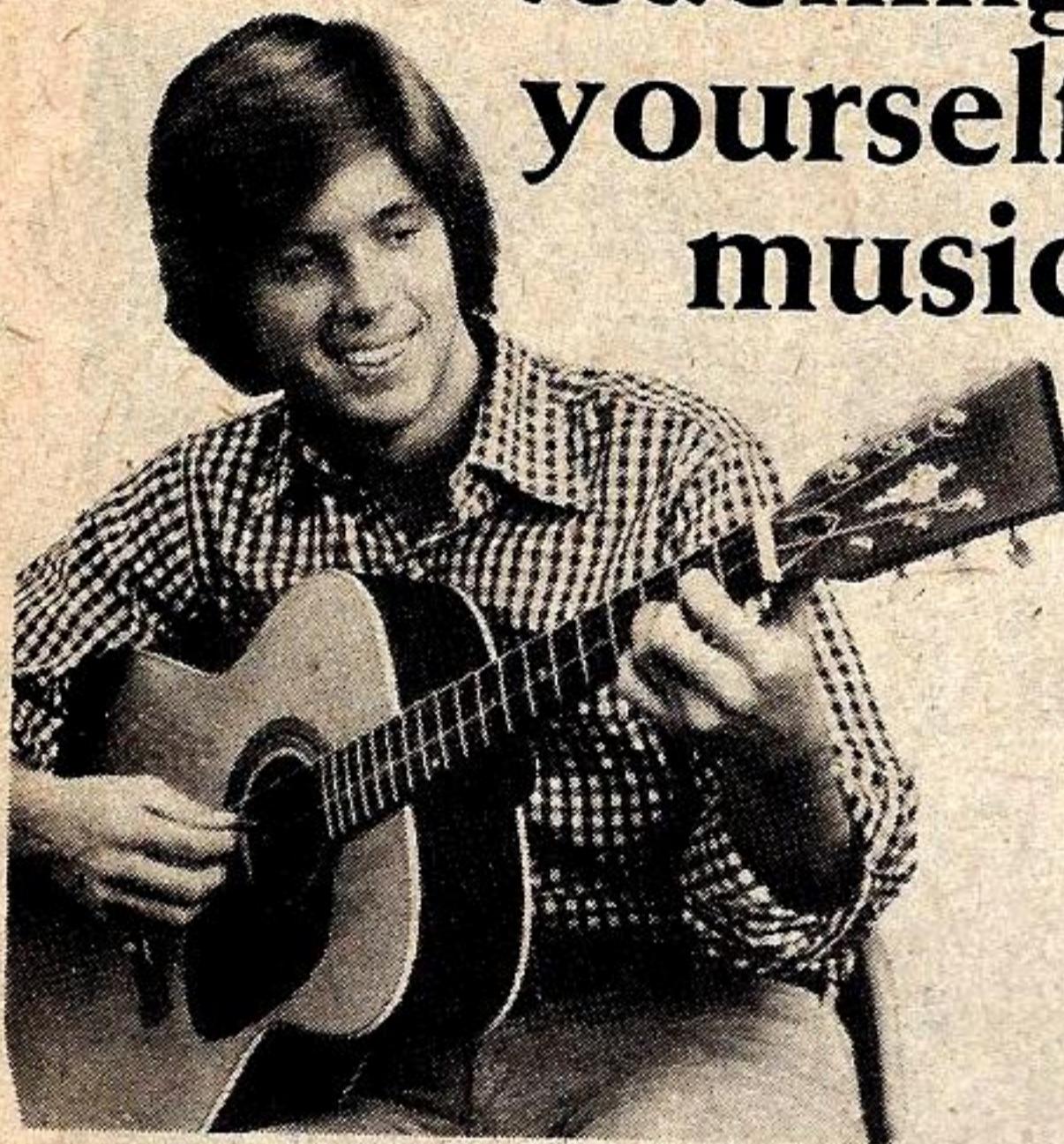
When a wrestler finds himself weaker than his foe, the obvious thing for him to do is attempt to outmaneuver his opponent. Verne is obvious; he tried to be agile when he couldn't be strong. He soon discovered there was a second area where he couldn't cope. Whenever he tried something, Von Raschke immediately countered. I couldn't help laughing at Gagne's clumsiness.

When the physical goes, some
(Continued on page 62)

Above: Gagne lies in agony on the mat as Von Raschke applies the claw, enough to force even the bravest man to submit. It wasn't enough to make Verne quit, though. Right: Forced into the corner, Baron alternately begs the referee and Gagne to let him escape without injury. Neither man is likely to show Von Raschke any mercy at all!



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depending on him; they couldn't be disappointed. The make-up was quickly applied and Bruiser stepped before the cameras. The audience broke out into cheers at his appearance.

For six hours, Bruiser hosted the show. He did everything, from answering phones to accepting pledges of money. However, he was most remarkable with the children afflicted with birth defects. This man, whose very presence has terrified the toughest men in the world, was able to win the love and trust of these children immediately. Watching him with the youngsters showed he is a man who walks in a state of grace.

Bruiser brimmed with pride as he offered "I Am A Bruiser Buddy" license plates free to those pledging five dollars or more. The thought his reputation could gain funds for the disadvantaged made him the happiest man on earth.

"This is more than a souvenir," Bruiser told the television audience, "it's a symbol of people caring for each other. Put this on your car and people will know someone cares for those less fortunate. All that separates us from a world free of birth defects is knowledge. And that knowledge comes from research, which costs money. It's a crime there are children born less than perfect. Every one of us can do something about it. No child should be handicapped from the moment of birth. No child need be."

"There are very few people out there who aren't going to waste at least five dollars on something silly this week. That money can do a world of good if given to this cause. Do something decent with that money instead of throwing it away. Help every child yet to be born to lead a full and normal life."

The phones started ringing after this impassioned plea. People who had never even been in a wrestling arena were giving five dollars wanting the privilege of being a "Bruiser Buddy."

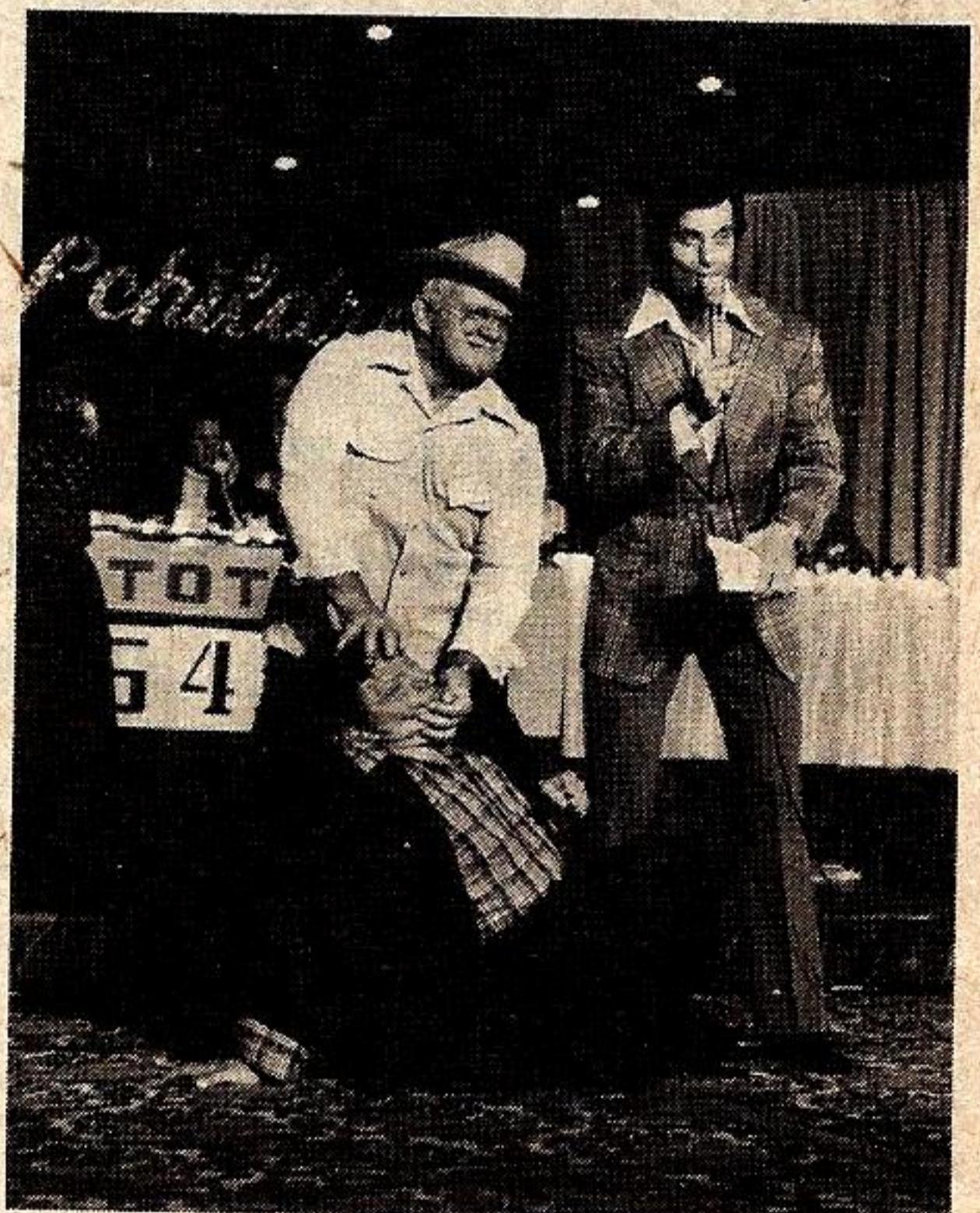
When the telethon was over, Bruiser made sure to say a personal farewell to everyone involved in the telethon. Though exhausted, he gladly stayed behind to pose for publicity photos with Peter Lupus,

TOUGHEST BATTLE

(Continued from Page 21)



Bruiser and That's My Momma star Theresa Merritt grab a cup of coffee during one of their few free moments (above). Soon, Bruiser is back on camera with actors Peter Lupus and clowning Joe Higgins (below).



Joe Higgins, Marvin Johnson, and other celebrities involved in the telethon. He would never be too tired to help the cause.

Afterwards, Bruiser went back to the bus which took him to the arena. He was happily surprised to see most of the reporters who had come with him were still there. With Bruiser as an example, they would have been ashamed to leave before they did their utmost to help the cause. None would ever think of Bruiser as merciless again. To even the most veteran of journalists, this wrestler was a true hero. □

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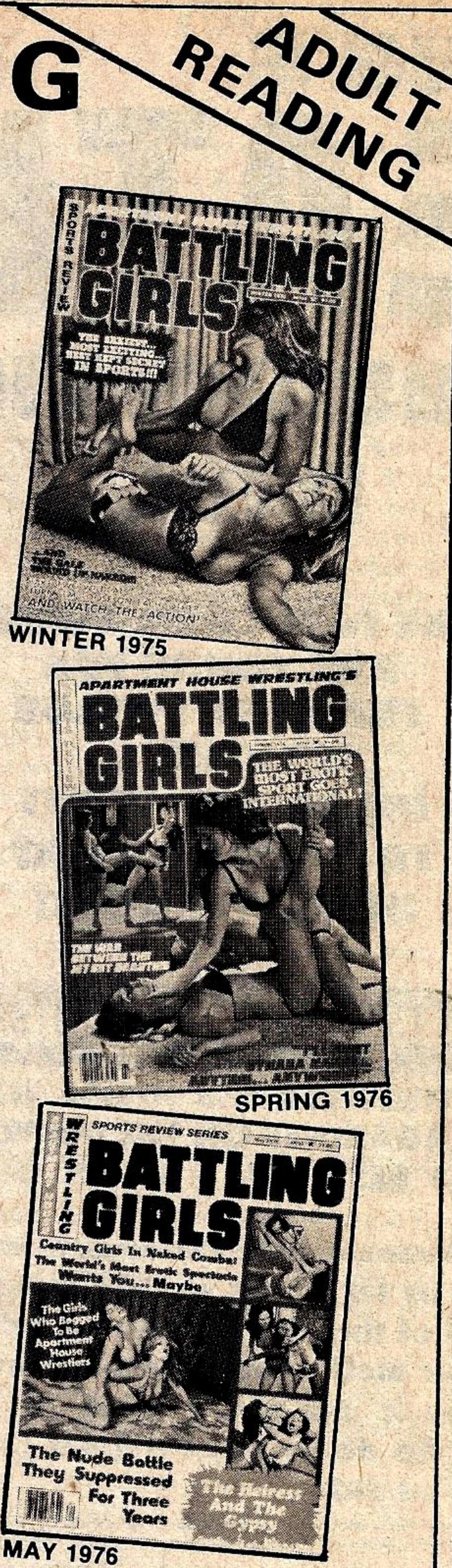
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MAY 1976

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NOTE: Because some material might be of a mature nature, parental approval for those under 18 is recommended.



YOU ASKED US

(Continued from Page 18)

who they were, they'd be too afraid to wrestle them," boasts their manager, Captain Lou Albano.

Q: Have Pampero Firpo and Baron Von Raschke settled their "Battle of the Claws" yet?—George Decker, Indianapolis, Indiana

A: No. Both still claim they each have superior claw holds, although neither has proven to be better so far.

Q: Who is Steve Keirn's favorite tag team partner?—Jack Reasman, Richmond, Virginia

A: "Mike Graham," Steve says without hesitation. "He's a great partner to work with. He's very easy to get along with and always there to help when you're being doubleteamed."

Q: Has any photo ever been shown of Greg Valentine and Hiroshima Joe together?—Larry Tasher, Los Angeles, California

A: No Larry. It's a photo the entire sport would like to see, since Greg keeps claiming he's not the masked man.

Q: Will Dusty Rhodes please do me a favor and get rid of Stan Stasiak. I hate Stasiak. How about it Dusty?—Janet Fenster, Savannah, Georgia

A: "I realize the people want me to get that rat Stasiak out of rasslin'," announces Dusty. "And I'll do my best to comply with the wishes of the people. If I can get my hands on Stasiak I'll run him out of the south. Have no doubts, people. I can do it!"

Q: Would Nick Bockwinkle wrestle Ray Stevens if Ray challenged him for the AWA title?—Sid Sheppard, Denver, Colorado

A: "I wouldn't want to be put in that position," Nick stated bluntly. "Ray would never challenge me—at least I hope not. But if I were forced into that match against him, it would be the toughest match I would ever have. I'm sure of this."

Q: I heard a rumor Tony Marino was injured in an auto accident. Is there any truth to this?—Jerry Talbot, Toronto, Ontario

A: Marino was driving to an airport to catch an airplane to Calgary, Alberta when he was in an auto crash. However he didn't suffer serious damage and he may be back in action by now. □

YOUR LETTERS

(Continued from Page 10)

be the slightest bit envious of that bum. Everybody knows a wrestler's looks don't mean a damn thing. When it comes down to guts and wrestling ability, Funk far outdoes Brisco, who was a shining example of a cowardly champion.

Once again, the belt is in the Funk family, where it truly belongs.

DAVID COX

Greensboro, North Carolina

FUNK POWER

I am writing in regard to a letter from Mrs. Terry Donnelly (THE WRESTLER/March 1976), who did not, but came close to, insulting a great wrestling brothers tag team, probably the greatest team in professional wrestling, the Funk Brothers.

Terry, who is the current NWA world heavyweight champion, is also the former international champion. Dory Jr., probably the greatest world champion there ever was, also formerly held the Missouri championship, and United States championship.

When Harley Race was world champion, and when Bulldog Bob Brown was United States champion, Dory and Terry beat them in a tag team match. I am not saying Jack Brisco was not a good champion, but if you look in THE WRESTLER or INSIDE WRESTLING, instead of seeing Jack Brisco—champion, Terry Funk—contender, you will see Terry Funk—champion, Jack Brisco—Contender.

JOHN BOUD
Leavenworth, Kansas

FUNNIEST THING

Steve Strong a superstar of wrestling? That is the funniest thing I've seen in your magazine yet. The only thing that man is a superstar at is blowing up balloons. He is full of hot air.

As far as I'm concerned, Ric Flair is the only *true* superstar of wrestling. Ric is better than Strong can ever be!

MICHELLE BUCHANAN
Virginia Beach, Virginia

POOR JOHN

I was fascinated by your perceptive article, "John Tolos' Frantic Search for Peace (THE WRESTLER/March

1976). I feel I better understand this wrestler's psychological motivations now, and can appreciate the inner torture he must be struggling through.

Hopefully he will someday reach inner peace with himself. And when that day comes, John Tolos will be great in and out of the ring.

GERRY GILBERT
Odessa, Texas

PAUL IS RIGHT

Paul Jones is right to think he can beat any champion ("Why the Champions Fear Paul Jones" THE WRESTLER/April 1976). I have seen him wrestle many times, and he is excellent.

Of course, I hope he gets Terry Funk's title first. Funk is too arrogant and unskilled a wrestler to retain a crown for very long. The first time he battles Jones, Terry will become an ex-champion!

After Funk, he will easily relieve Nick Bockwinkle of his title, then strip the belt from Sammartino's waist. Then, the man who should be the one champion of the world, will be the one champion of the world!

DARCY JANELLE
Winston Salem, North Carolina □

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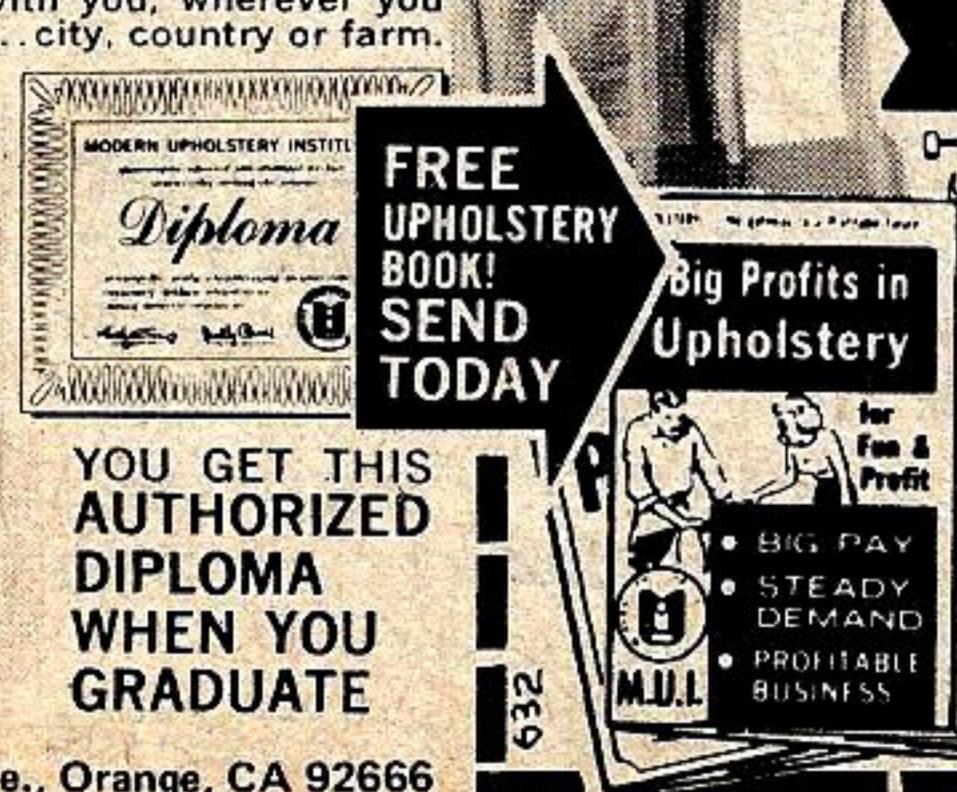
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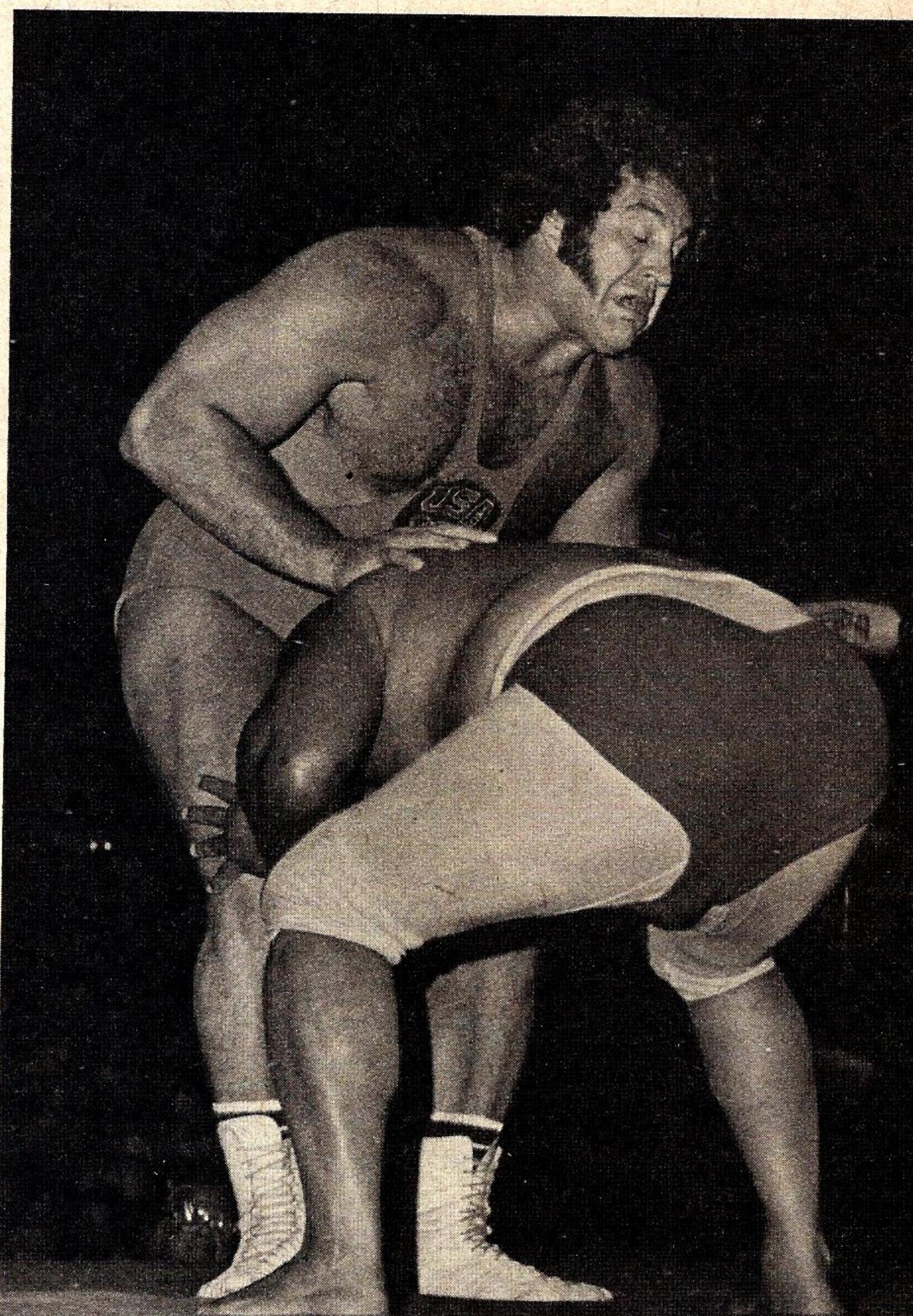
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KEN PATERA

(Continued from Page 25)



Mr. Fugi reaches back to his Sumo wrestler days to successfully barrel into Ken Patera's belly early in the match. Only Ken's excellent conditioning saved him from being knocked senseless from the force of the attack. Fugi was shocked Ken kept on wrestling!

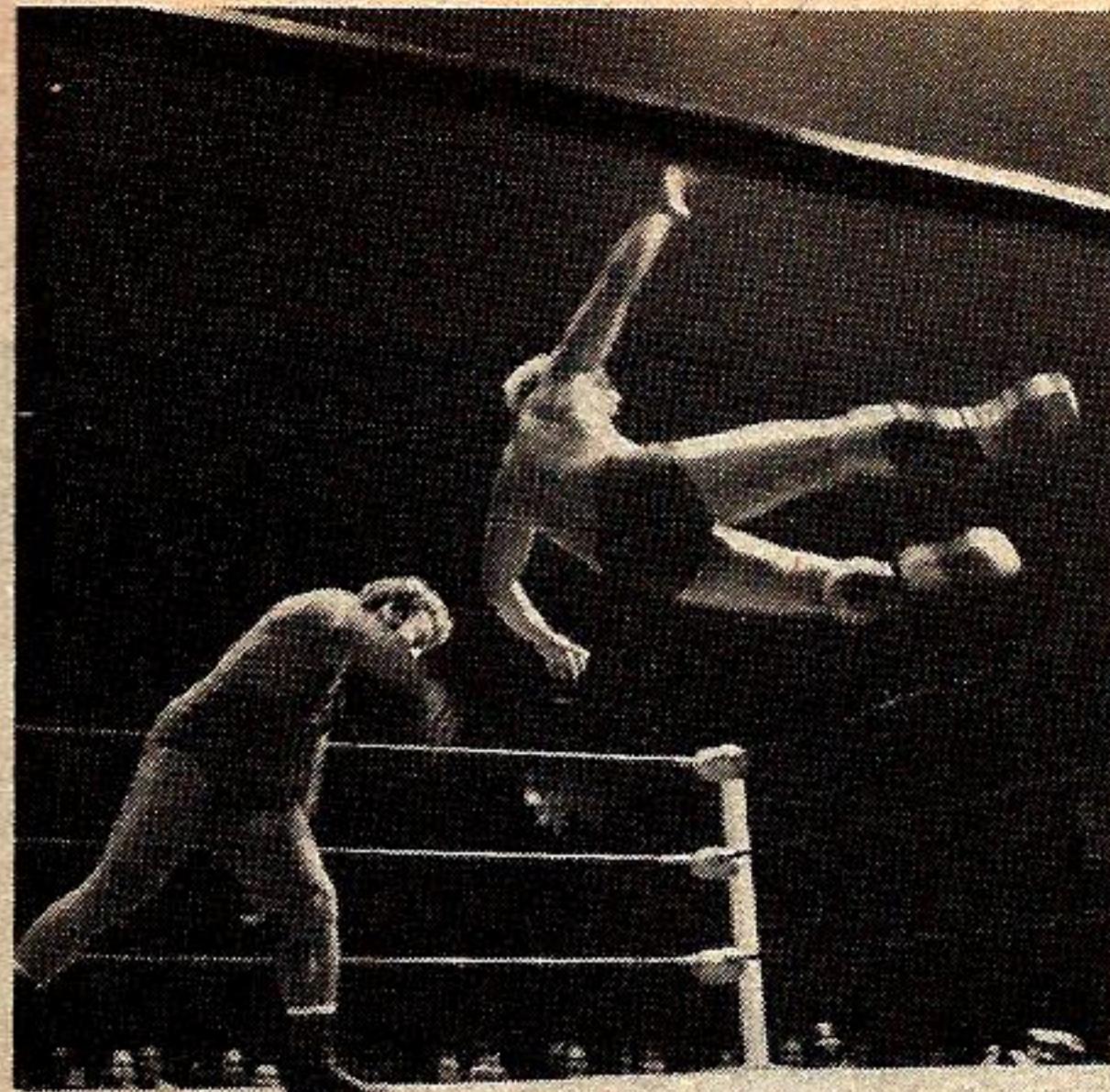
nents; one Mr. Fugi was sorry to receive.

It had been a ferocious match for both wrestlers from the start. Neither man had been able to hold on to an advantage for more than a few moments at a time. For every move Mr. Fugi executed, Patera executed a brilliant counter-maneuver.

At 15 minutes into the battle, the

intensity of the fury of both men increased. Legal and illegal moves were traded back and forth between Patera and Mr. Fugi, but still neither man could gain the edge over the other.

Suddenly, Mr. Fugi stepped back across the ring, momentarily puzzling Ken. Then, Mr. Fugi started rushing toward Patera in hopes of knocking Ken to the canvas and gaining control.



Above: Paul Perschmann learns how the power of Patera can be used to send a foe hurtling through the air. Below: After his victory, Ken Patera relaxes happily in his dressing room.



However, Ken quickly realized what the situation was, and turned it around to his advantage.

Anticipating Mr. Fugi's next move, Patera readied himself. When Fugi began rushing toward Ken, the young man was waiting. As Fugi's head hit Patera, Ken grabbed the Japanese wrestler by the waist, picked him up, and threw him into the audience. No one was more amazed than Mr. Fugi. Ken remained in the ring, laughing hysterically.

The referee immediately started counting Mr. Fugi out. The Japanese wrestler tried to regain his senses and scramble back to the ring, but it was too late. By the time he neared the ring apron, Fugi had been counted out and the match awarded to Patera.

Afterward, Ken had these comments on the match: "It was a tough battle, and Fugi did give me a difficult time. However, it did seem kind of funny to see him flying through the air like a Japanese UFO!" □

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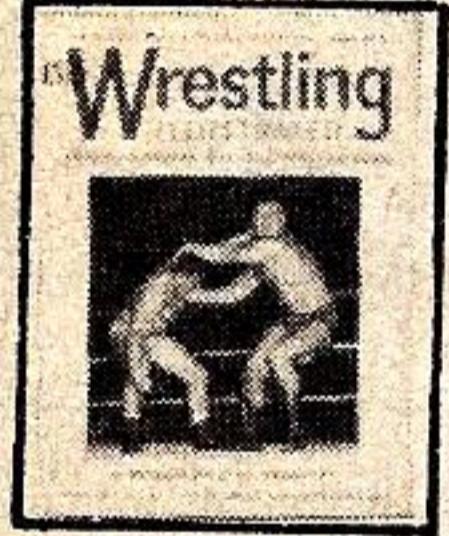
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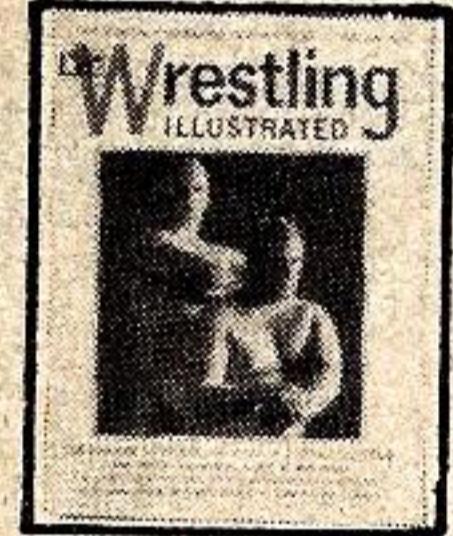
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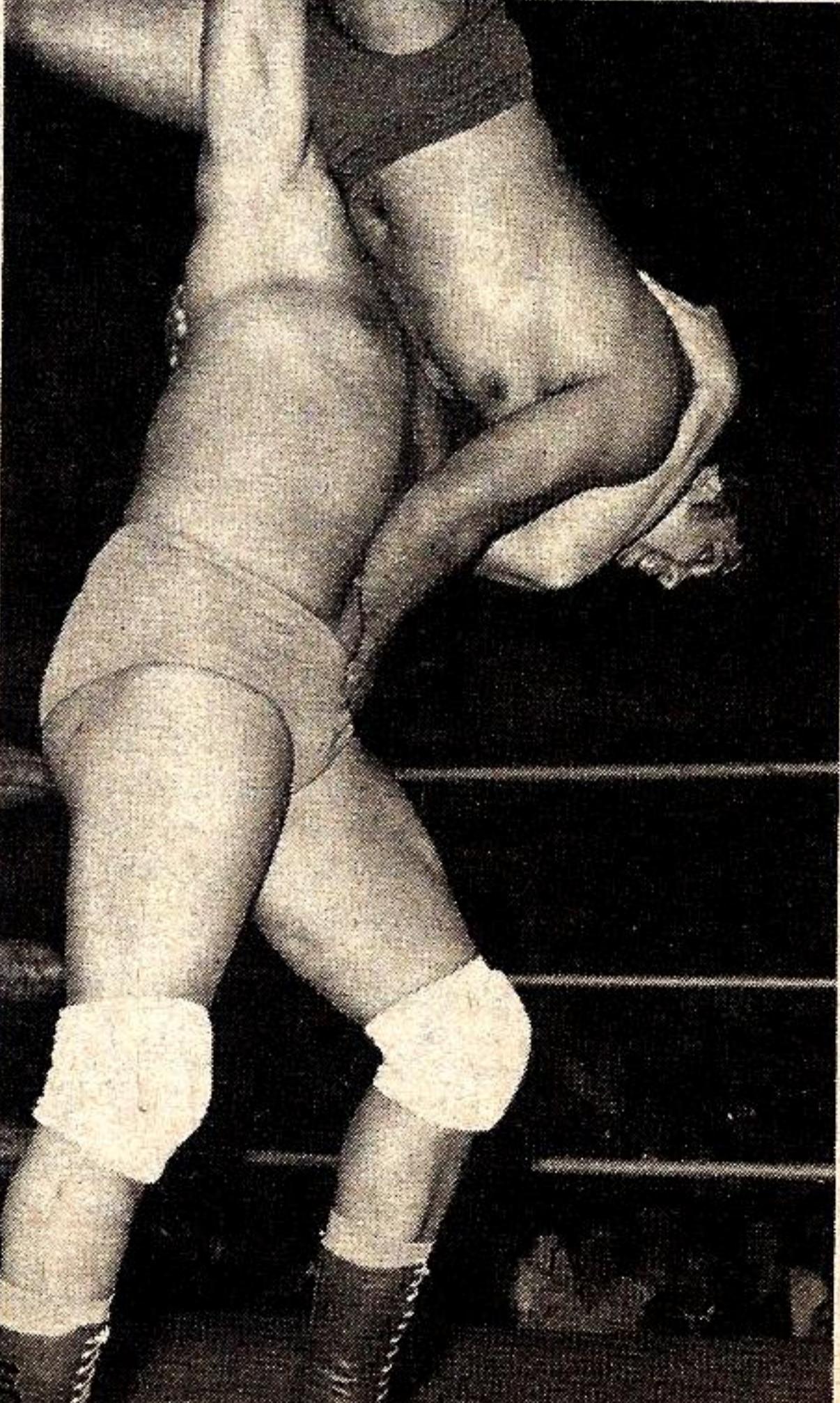
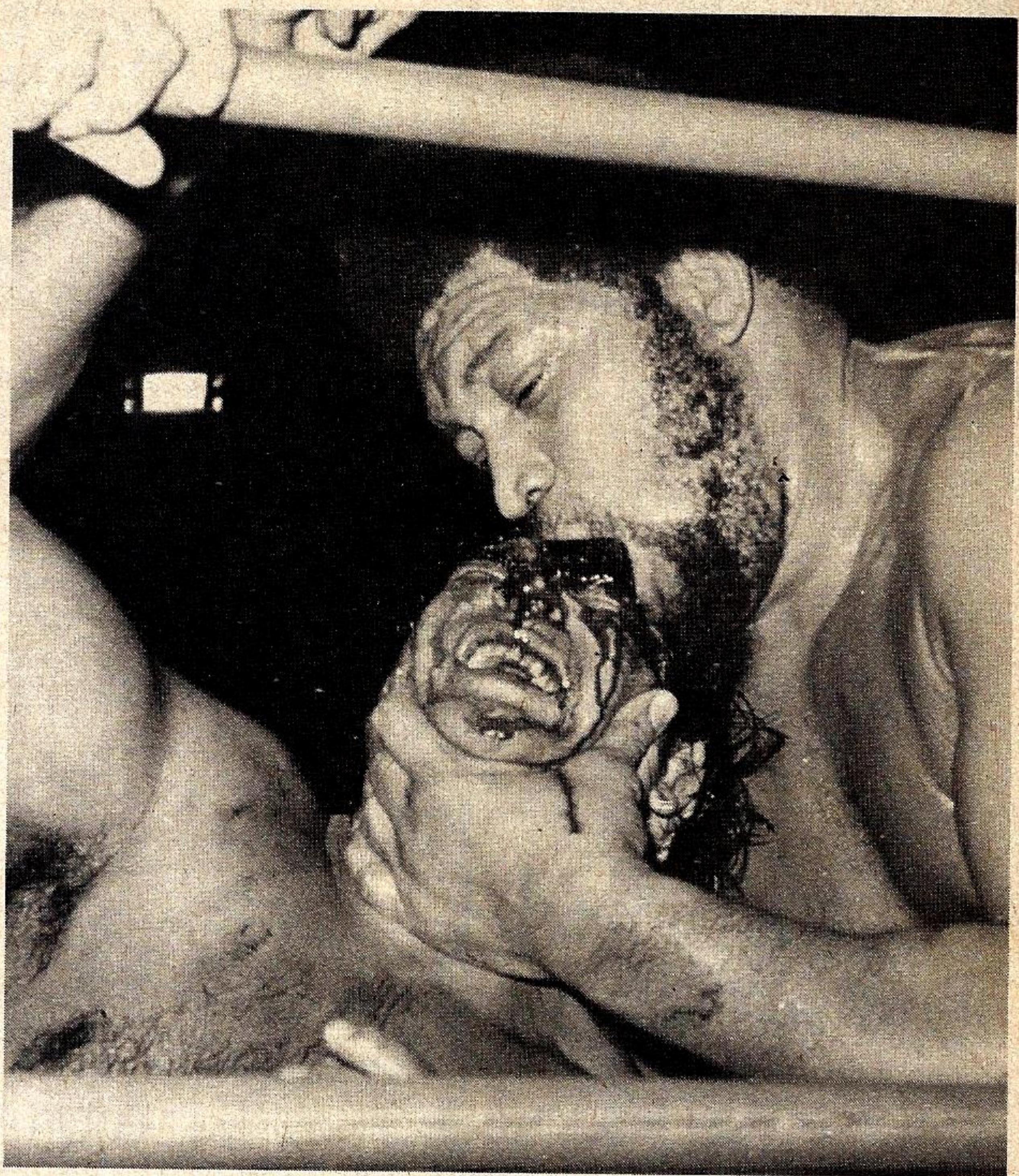
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ROOKIE

(Continued from Page 30)



Above: His teeth like knives, Ladd slashes away at Chavo's skull. The blood pours into the young man's eyes and blinds him. Left: Chavo is slammed to the canvas by Ladd as Ernie gains control of the battle.

big man's reach. Then he climbed onto the ropes. Within a few seconds, he expertly executed a flying dropkick, landing his feet squarely on Ladd's face.

Ernie fell to the canvas. Chavo leapt into the air again, hoping to bring the king of wrestling down permanently. But Ernie decided he had a better idea for ending this match. Just as Guerrero was about to land, Ladd rolled out of the way, then vaulted to his feet. The 6-9 wrestler towered over his opponent.

With sudden swift momentum, Ernie grabbed Chavo, picked him up, and slammed the young Mexican's body back to the canvas. Then Ladd

brandished his famous taped thumb. Three seconds later, that thumb was working its way into Chavo's eye. Suddenly blood appeared around the area of Guerrero's left eye and temple.

Ernie, satisfied he was going to hold control for the duration of the match, began to toy with his foe. With a series of excellently executed maneuvers, Ladd began teaching Chavo the lesson he promised. And Guerrero seemed powerless to stop the assault.



Ernie Ladd's bandaged thumb is driven into Chavo's neck, an incredibly agonizing torture.

Soon blood could be seen everywhere, yet Ladd would not hold back on his attack. There seemed to be no way for Chavo to win, and Ernie knew it. The spectators were aghast to the spectacle before them. Their hero—the young man whose fame had spread in a few short months—was losing for the first time, and he was losing badly.

Just as Ladd was about to ensure his victory, the referee stepped in and stopped the match. He told everyone Guerrero was bleeding too badly to continue, and awarded the match to Ladd. Though he was disappointed he did not win a clear-cut victory, Ernie was still satisfied he had taught Chavo Guerrero a lesson in humility.

Afterwards in his dressing room, Ladd talked happily with reporters. "I hope this fellow knows now not to tangle with the King. I do believe we won't have any trouble with this rookie for a long time."

But Ernie was mistaken—Chavo issued a challenge for a rematch. "If he thinks he can beat me using his thumb to gouge my eyes again, he is wrong. Next time we meet, I'll win!"

It looks like a million dollar rookie is involved in a very costly feud. □

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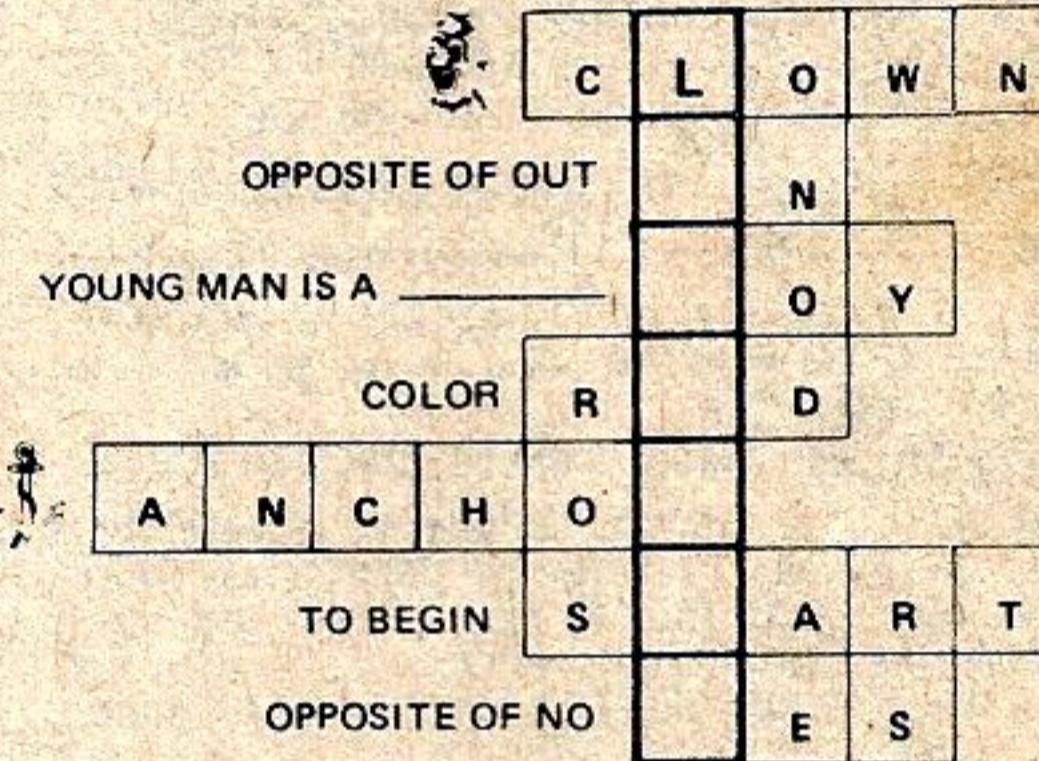
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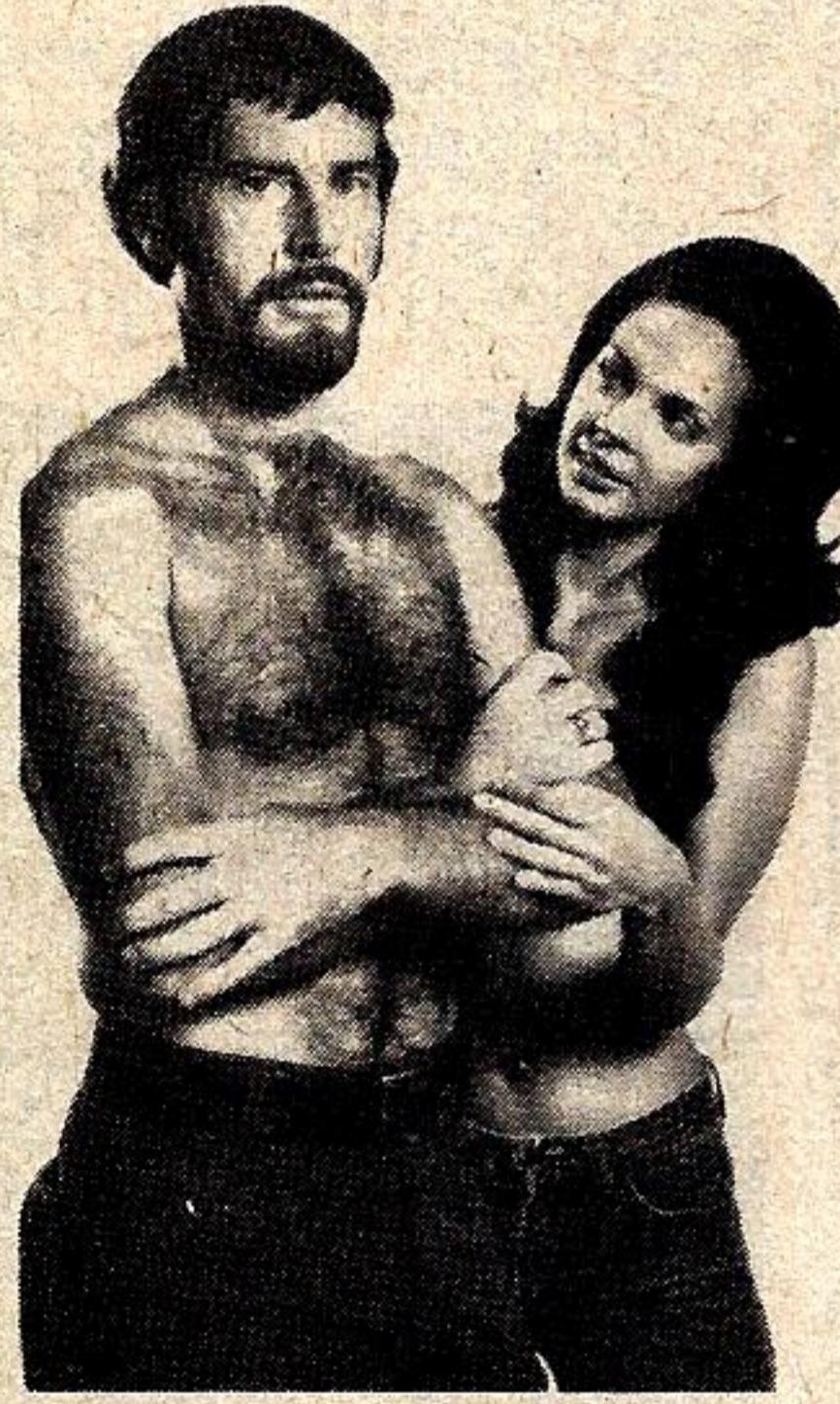
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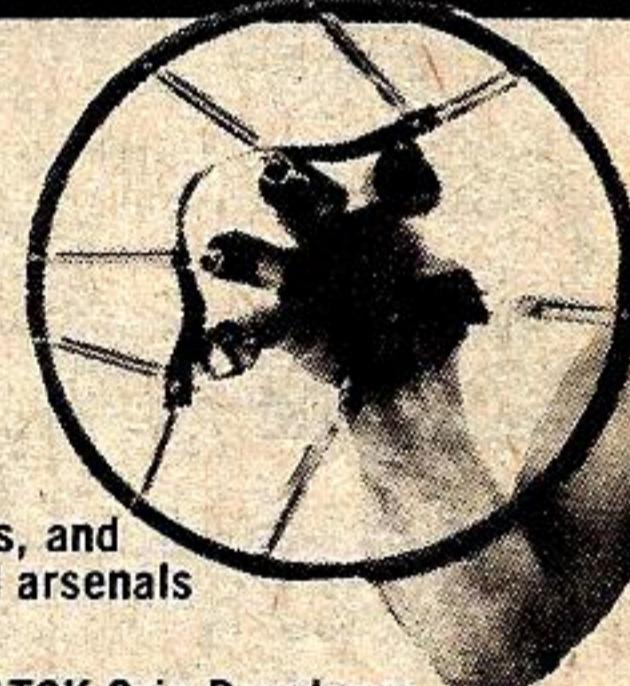
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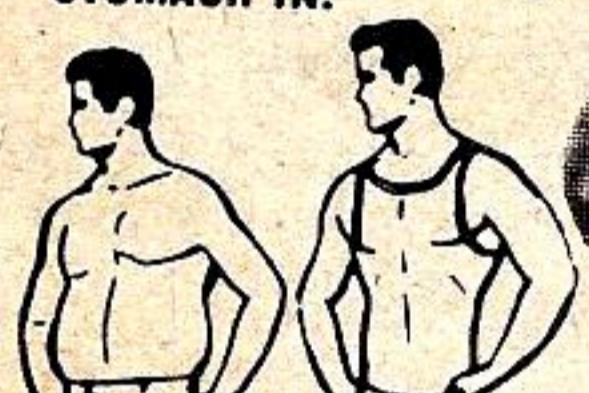
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PAUL JONES

(Continued from Page 39)



Above: Paul Jones is trapped in a corner and can't escape the savage fists of Mulligan late in the match. Below: Only an unscrupulous Blackjack would bodyslam a helpless referee.

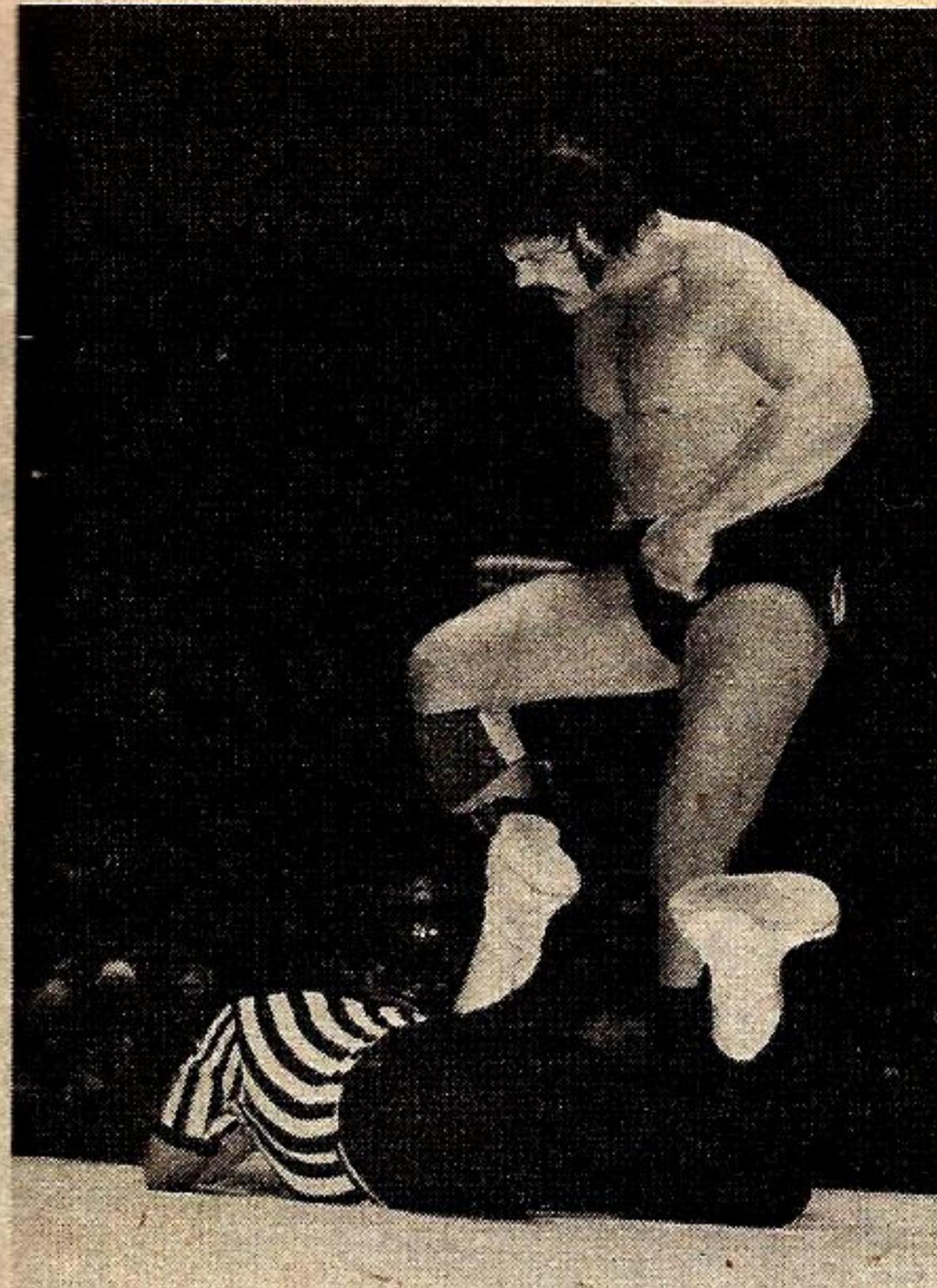


Jones and boozing Mulligan. The charisma of these two mat stars made the referee invisible to all. Yet, this man was aware of every nerve in his body.

Jones, for his part, was determined to make this a memorable match. He wanted the fans to see he could control a match against Mulligan; he could dominate this rulebreaker with scientific skill. This would prove he was a real champion.

When the bell sounded, the two men charged at each other. They traded holds with ruthless ferocity. Jones' scientific skills confounded Mulligan time and time again. In frustration, Blackjack resorted to uglier and more brutal tactics. After a while, the gouging and choking took its toll on Paul's body.

The referee proved his courage time and time again. Despite Mulligan's threats, the official repeatedly stopped him from being too violent. Only a very brave man would dare to cross a desperate Mulligan. Jones knew he owed this official a great debt.



Though the referee is sprawled on the canvas, this doesn't stop Mulligan from kicking him in the side again and again!

However, Jones couldn't withstand the vast repertoire of Blackjack's illegal tactics. Paul grew weaker and weaker and blood poured from numerous gashes. He might have been injured permanently save for the official's courageous officiating.

Finally, when Jones grew groggy and Mulligan ignored repeated warnings to halt his torture, the referee disqualified Blackjack. Mulligan let Jones fall to the canvas. Boiling with rage, he attacked the referee!

Paul realized it was his duty to save the referee, a man who had helped him often during the match. The wrestler struggled to his feet, but he couldn't prevent Mulligan from bodyslamming the helpless official. Jones couldn't stop this ugly display by a despicable bully.

Mulligan finally left the ring after he had pounded the referee into semi-consciousness. Jones couldn't do anything to help the man who had risked his life to save him. Paul felt the referee's beating was his fault.

The referee was helped back to the dressing room by his colleagues. Jones stumbled back alone. For the rest of his life he would have the memory of the referee being pummeled and his own helplessness. His failure would haunt him for the rest of his life. The guilt would remain a part of him long after the referee's wounds had healed.

□

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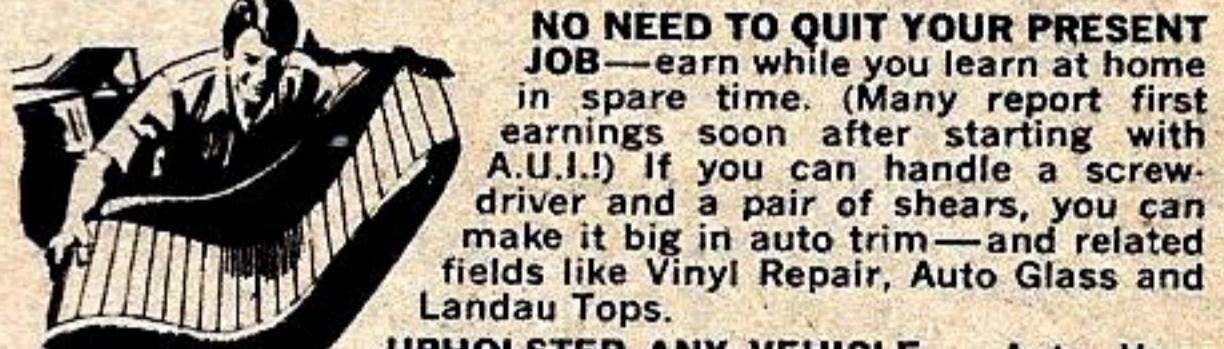
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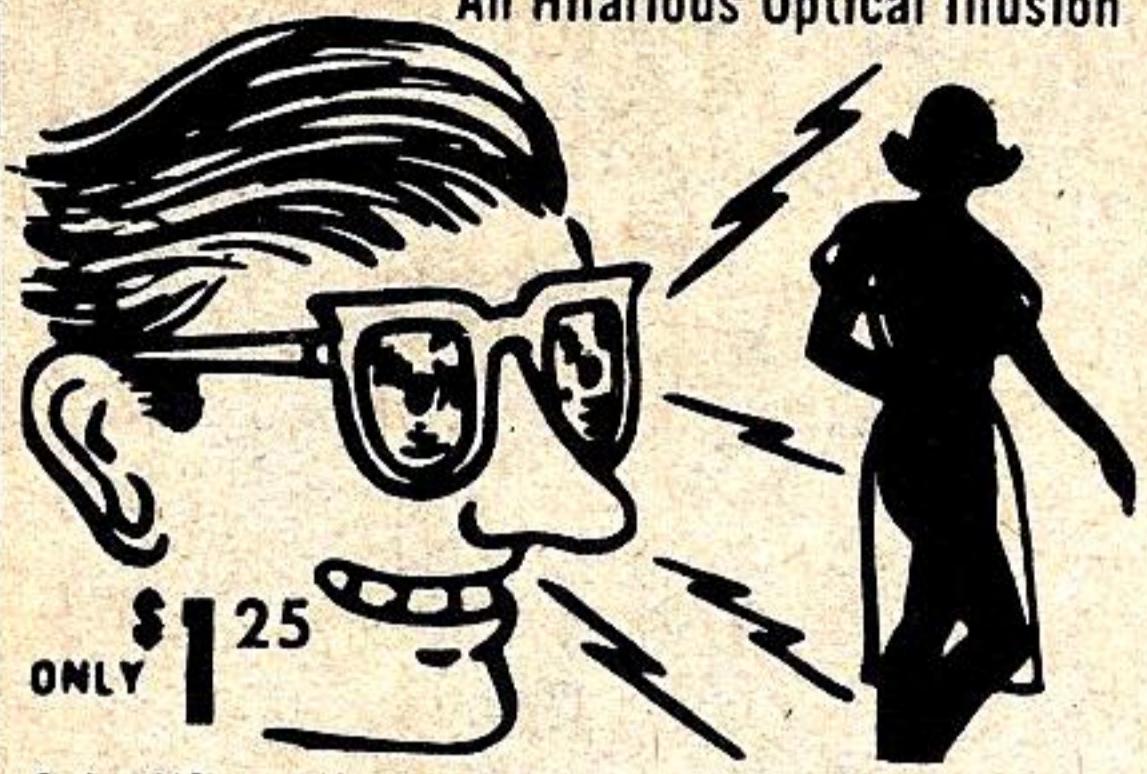
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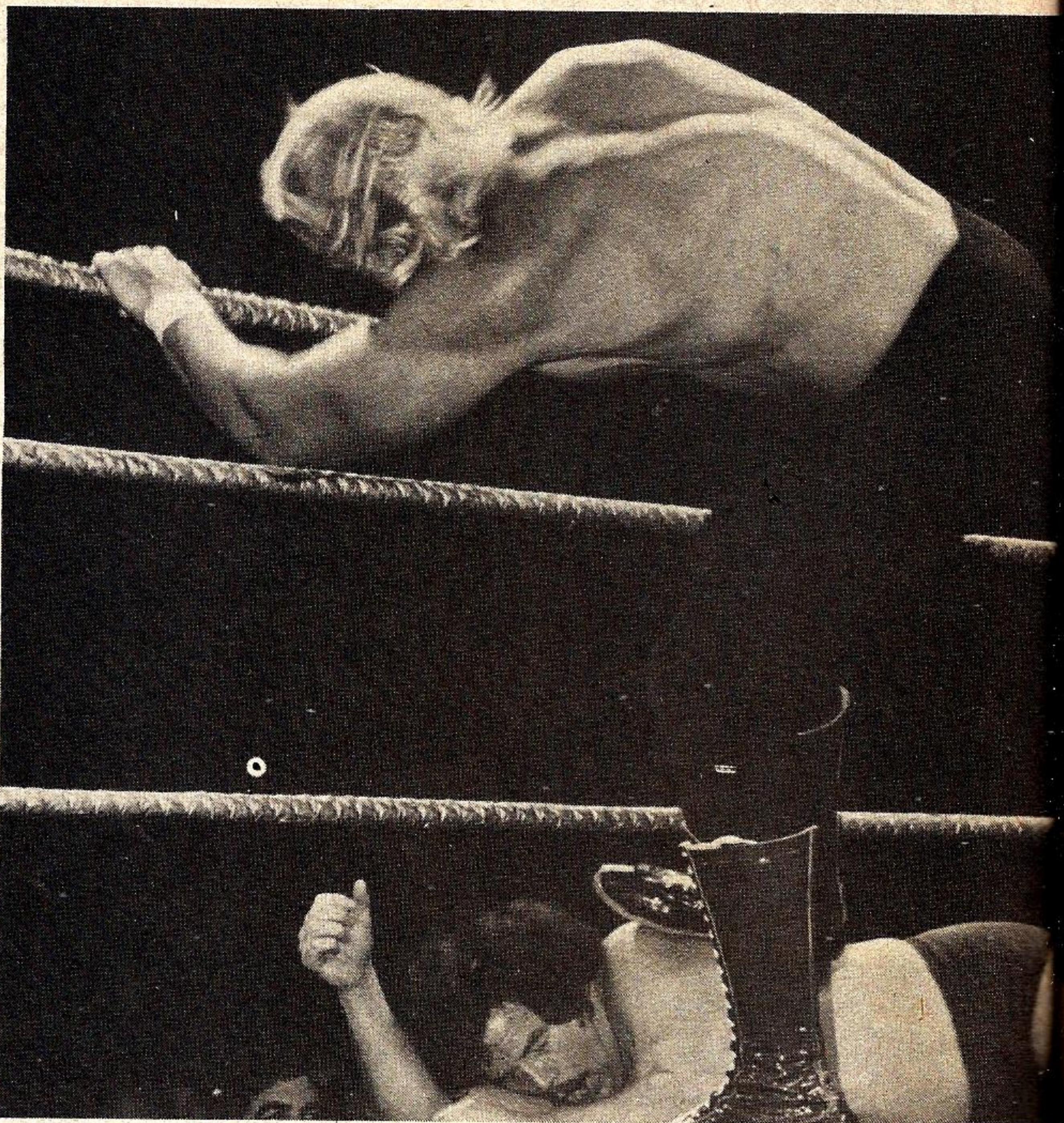
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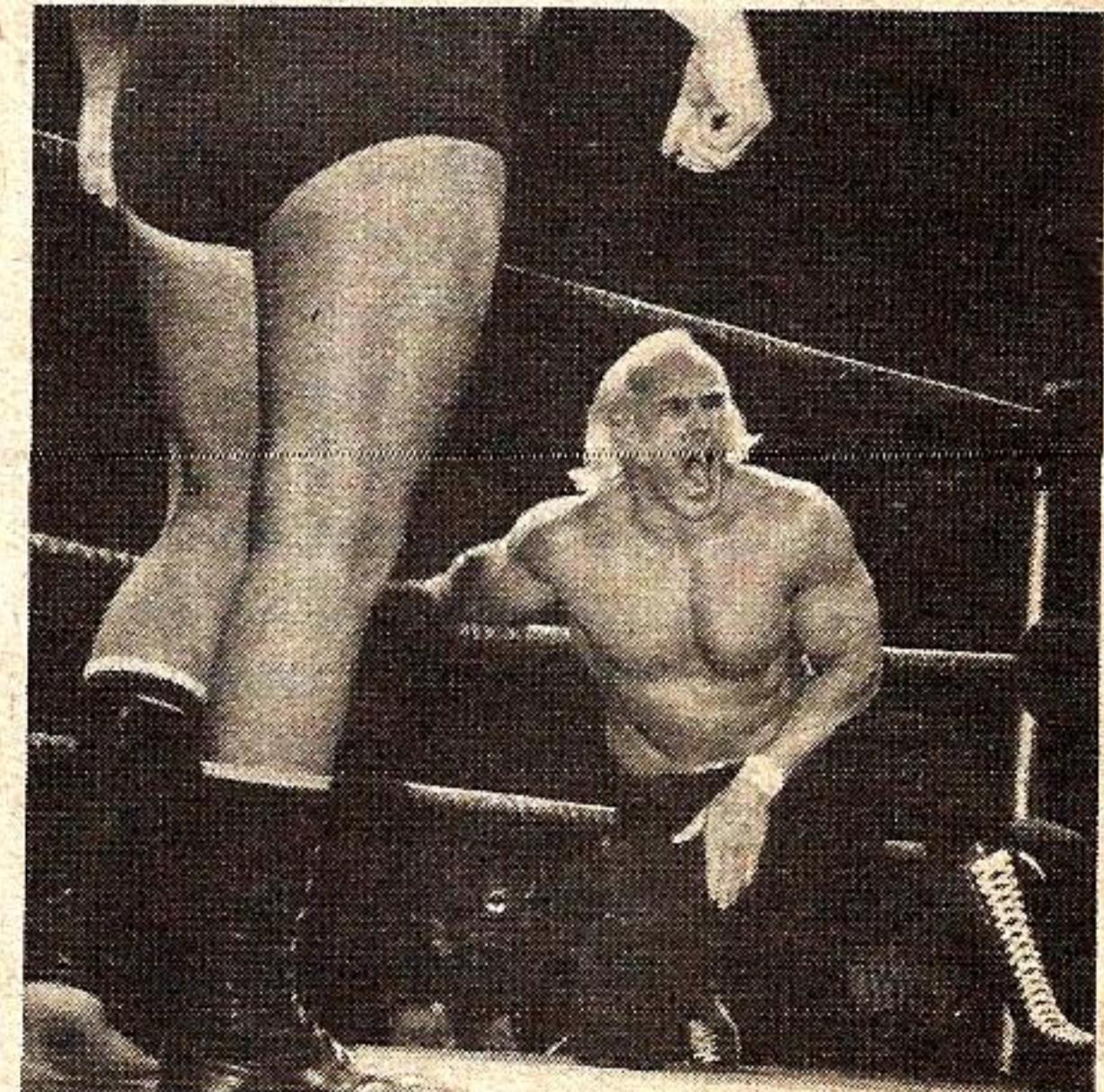
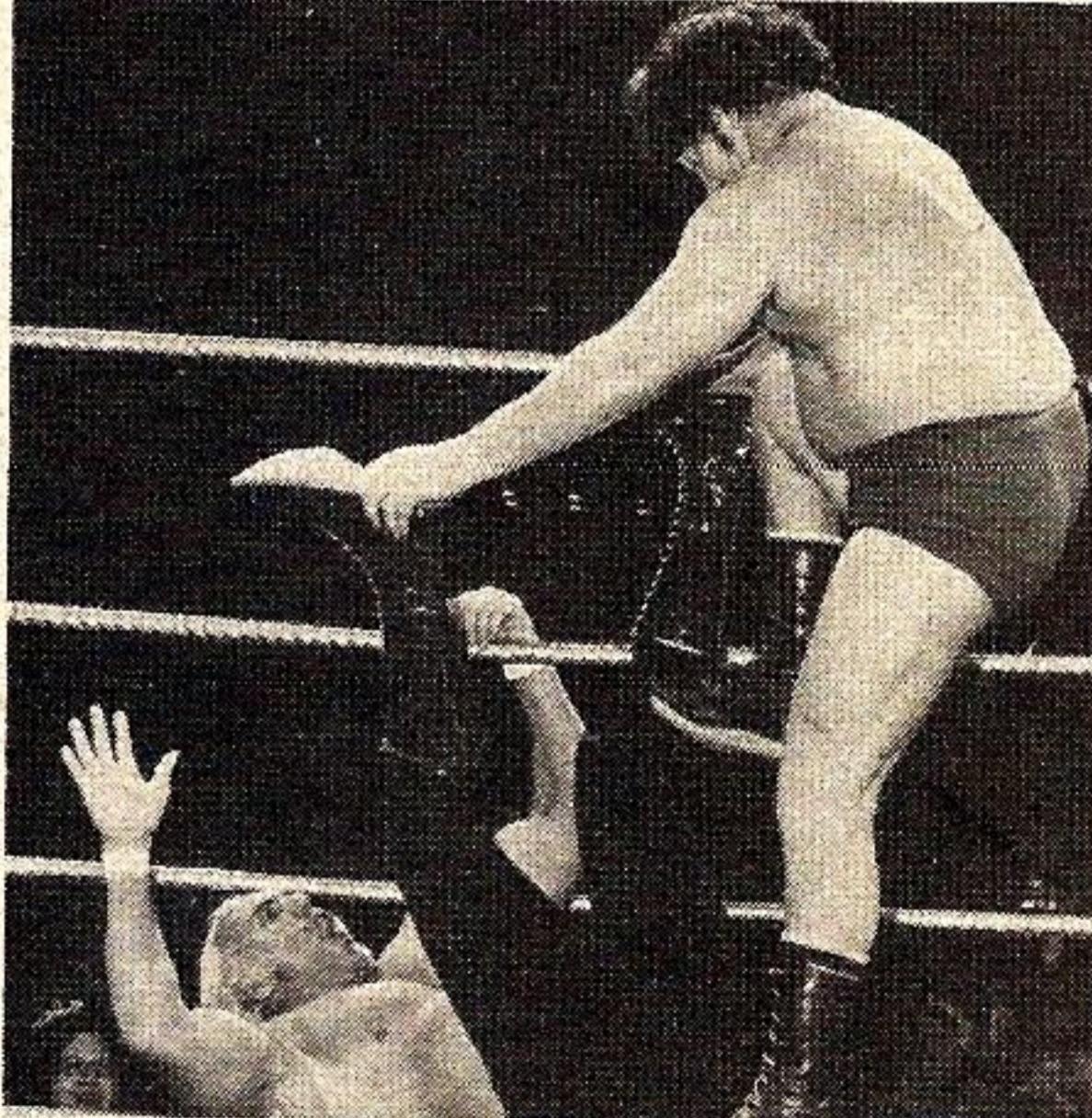
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Graham

(Continued from Page 42)



Graham attempts to kick Barrett out of the ring (above) early in the match. Undaunted, Pat comes back and slams his boot hard into Billy's thigh (below left). Billy then scurries to the corner and bellows out his agony for all present to hear (below right).

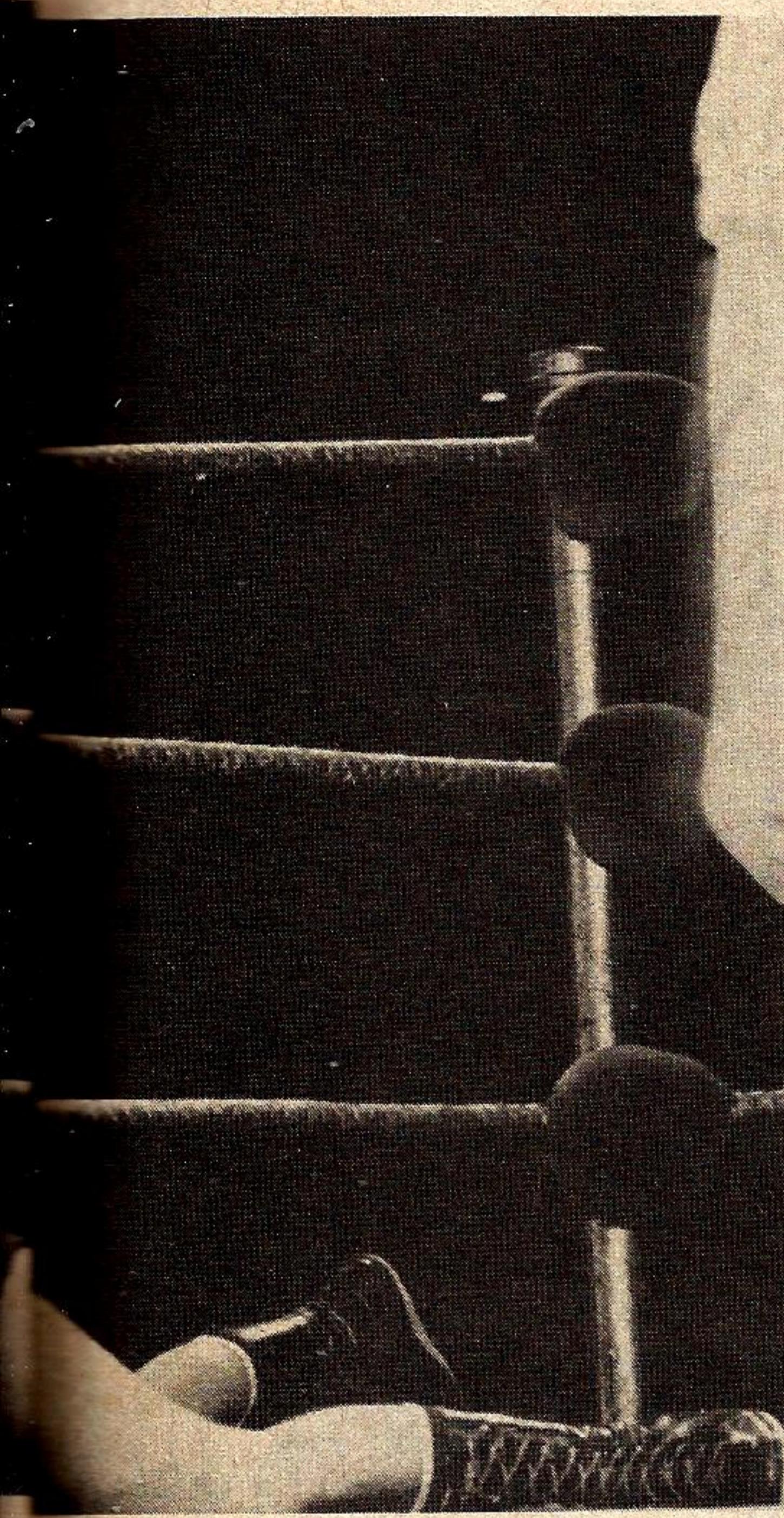


gets lucky and knocks me off. Well, I'll teach this flunkie a lesson he'll never forget! And they'll never get a flunkie to go after me again!"

When Graham walked into the arena, his face was an ugly mask of hatred. Climbing over the ropes, he spit in Barrett's direction. Pat simply

stood his ground, anxious and determined. This match could make him a top contender for every title in the world. It could be the most important match in his career.

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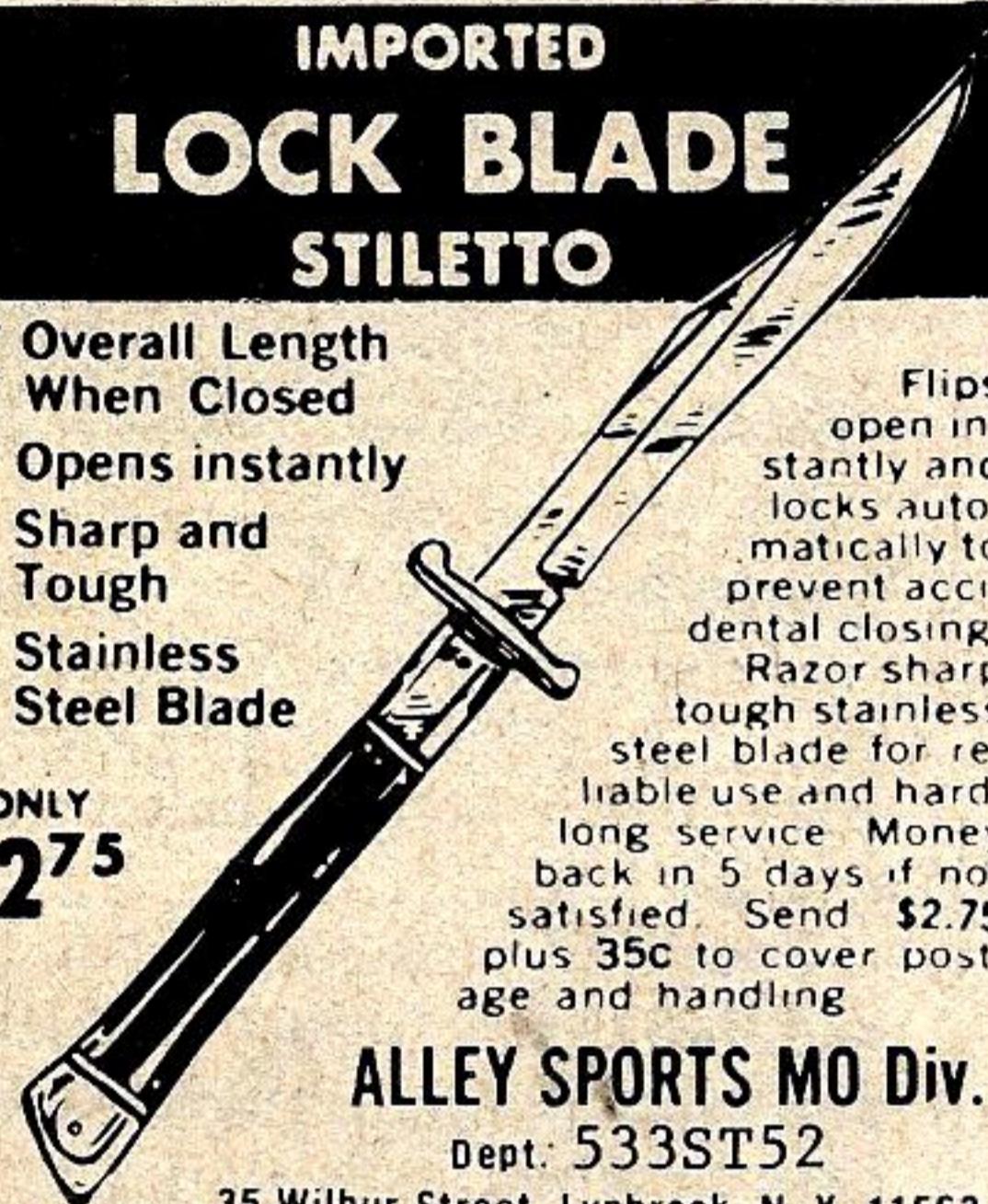
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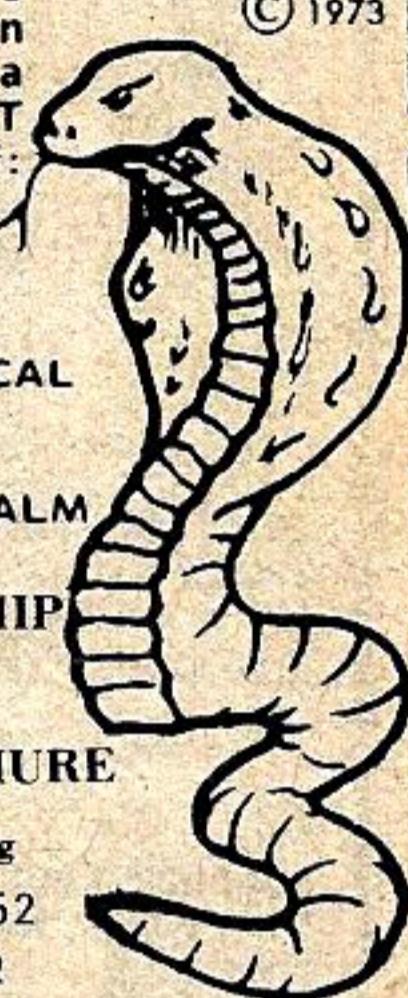
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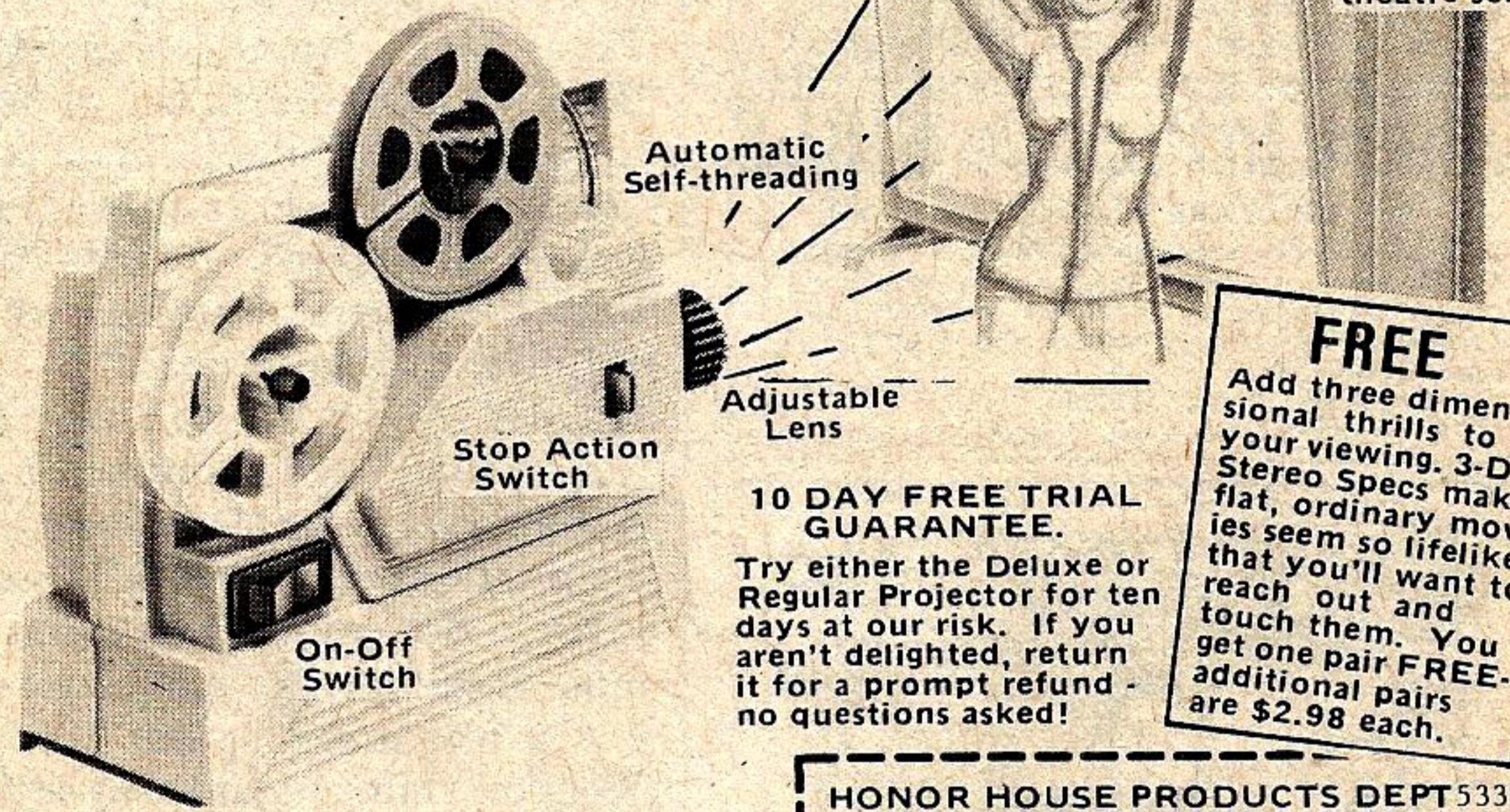
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Barrett's. Fans leaving that night swore either Graham played with Pat cruelly or Barrett confounded his foe at every turn. There was some truth to both observations.

Graham did his best to be vicious. Whenever possible, he tortured Pat beyond all need. Billy's eyes sparkled with delight as he felt his opponent's body crumple in agony. There were some maneuvers which Graham should have been embarrassed to execute. One of them—repeatedly kicking Barrett after the referee ordered him to stop—finally resulted in his disqualification. There was no way to admire Graham on this night.

Barrett wrestled as well as he ever has. Some maneuvers were majestic in their brilliance. Even Graham was visibly impressed by the young man.

After the match, Graham refused to admit he had not been given a match with a deserving opponent. He still called Barrett every name in the book. But somehow, the sting from his words were gone. Billy Graham knew he'd been a real battle!

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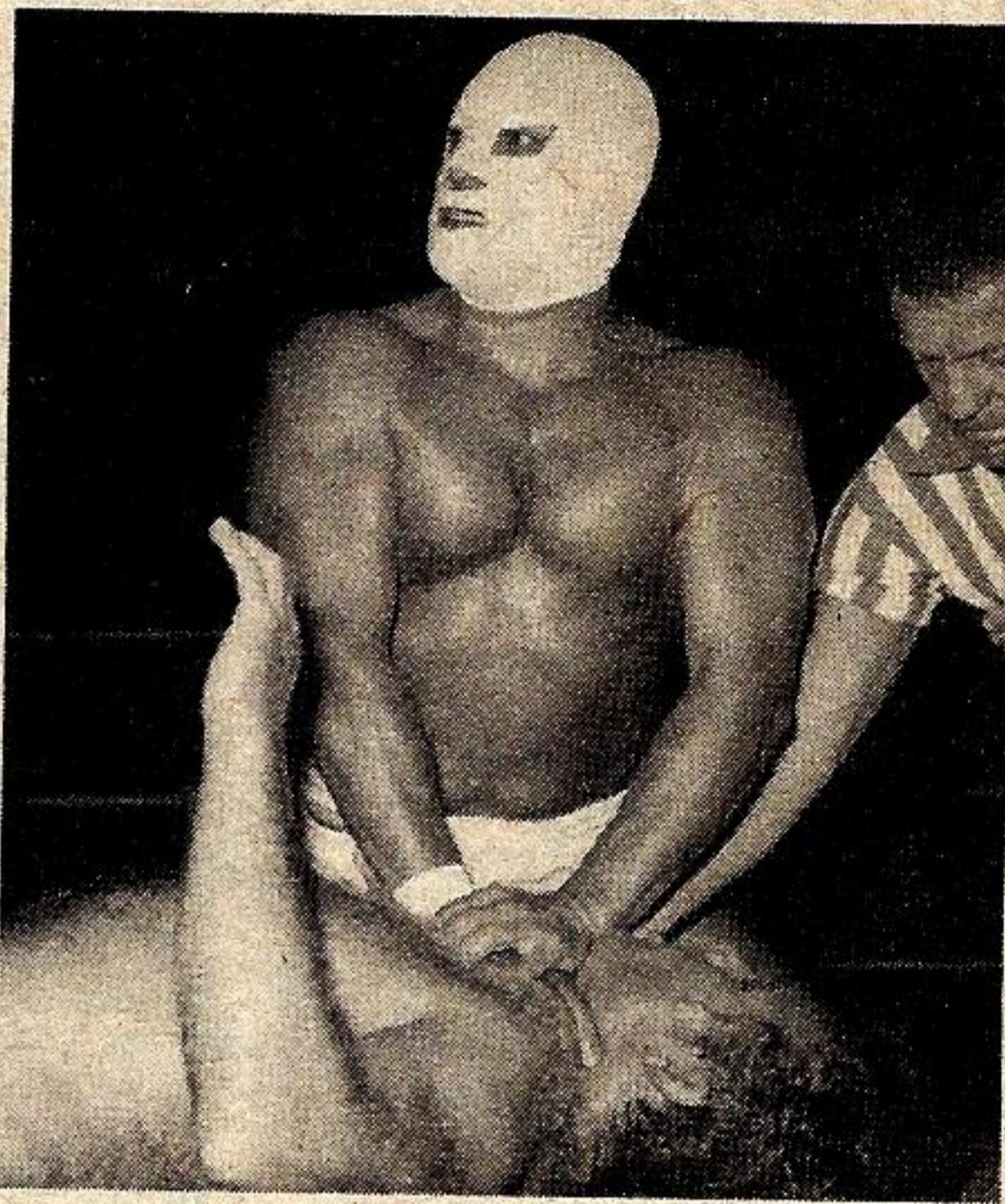
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HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING, BABY

(Continued from Page 8)



Dr. Wagner has lost the NWA light heavyweight championship to the great Rubi Rubalcaba.

Jerry Brisco working better than ever as a tag team.

Speaking of tag teams, Bob Roop and Bob Orton Jr. may use tactics that don't agree with the rulebook. But you have to admit, they work like a finely oiled machine . . . Captain Lou Albano showing his new team, the Masked Executioners, the path to the WWWF tag team title. He predicts his men will dethrone champions Louis Cerdan and Tony Parisi without much trouble . . . Freddie Blassie has taken huge Texas Stan Hansen under his wing. Blassie hopes Hansen will be his ticket to the WWWF title . . . Los Angeles, California fans delighted to see Chavo Guerrero's father—Gory—a skilled veteran—teaming with the "Million Dollar Rookie" . . . Dr. Wagner, NWA World Light Heavyweight king, was dethroned by Rubi Rubalcaba in a slam bang, action packed two out of three fall encounter.

Nick Bockwinkle's title has really inflated his ego. He is having a special AWA belt made up for him. "Who needs that hunk of junk Gagne wore all those years!" exclaims Nick . . . Les Thornton and Tony Charles wearing the Georgia tag team belts . . . Stan "The Man" Stasiak and his vicious heartpunch taking Georgia by storm . . . Ox Baker negotiating with WWWF promoters, looking for a shot at Sammartino . . . Kitty Adams and Fabulous Moolah on the verge of defeat when the queen of girl wrestlers toppled her with an illegal hold. Kitty feels she can dethrone Moolah in their

next match . . . Rookie Davy O'Hannon making a fine showing of himself in Japan, winning over many top stars.

Mil Mascaras won a tournament in Guatemala, organized by the Latin American Promoters Association. The event, lasting five days, was won by the sensational masked Mexican who toppled local favorite Jose Azzari. Mil now holds the All-Latin American title as well as the IWA belt. Wrestlers from eleven countries participated in the event.

On the day he left Guatemala, Mil was informed that on that same evening a giant earthquake shook Guatemala killing many thousands of people. Had he stayed in Guatemala a few hours longer, he might have been among them!

Bob Geigel and Akio Sato joined forces to upset the team of Ken Mantell and Ron Bass—who were undefeated for quite some time . . . Harley Race threatening to end Ed Wiskowski's career . . . Young Rick Gibson having his share of trouble with Billy Spears . . . Brute Bernard and manager Sir Dudley Clements invading the Ohio area . . . Pak Song back at the Florida mat wars.

After a lengthy absence, The Great Mephisto has returned to the south and he has a new manager—Haben Muhad—better known as Bearcat Wright. It appears Wright made what he described as "a pilgrimage to the Middle East." There, he became familiar with the customs and traditions of the area. He liked it so much, he has renounced all former associations—including his name.

"Henceforth, I am Haben Muhad," he informed the press. "My destiny lies with my new-found people, not with the bourgeois rabble of western civilization."

In addition to managing Mephisto, Wright—or Haben Muhad—will also manage Ali Pasha.

A dream come true for Jack Brisco. He finally whipped Dory Funk Jr. in a clear cut decision in St. Louis, Missouri. After 29:47 of great action, Jack trapped Dory in an inside cradle as Dory was trying to lock Jack in a spinning toehold. Terry Funk used a similar method to win the title from Jack.

And that's what's happening, baby!

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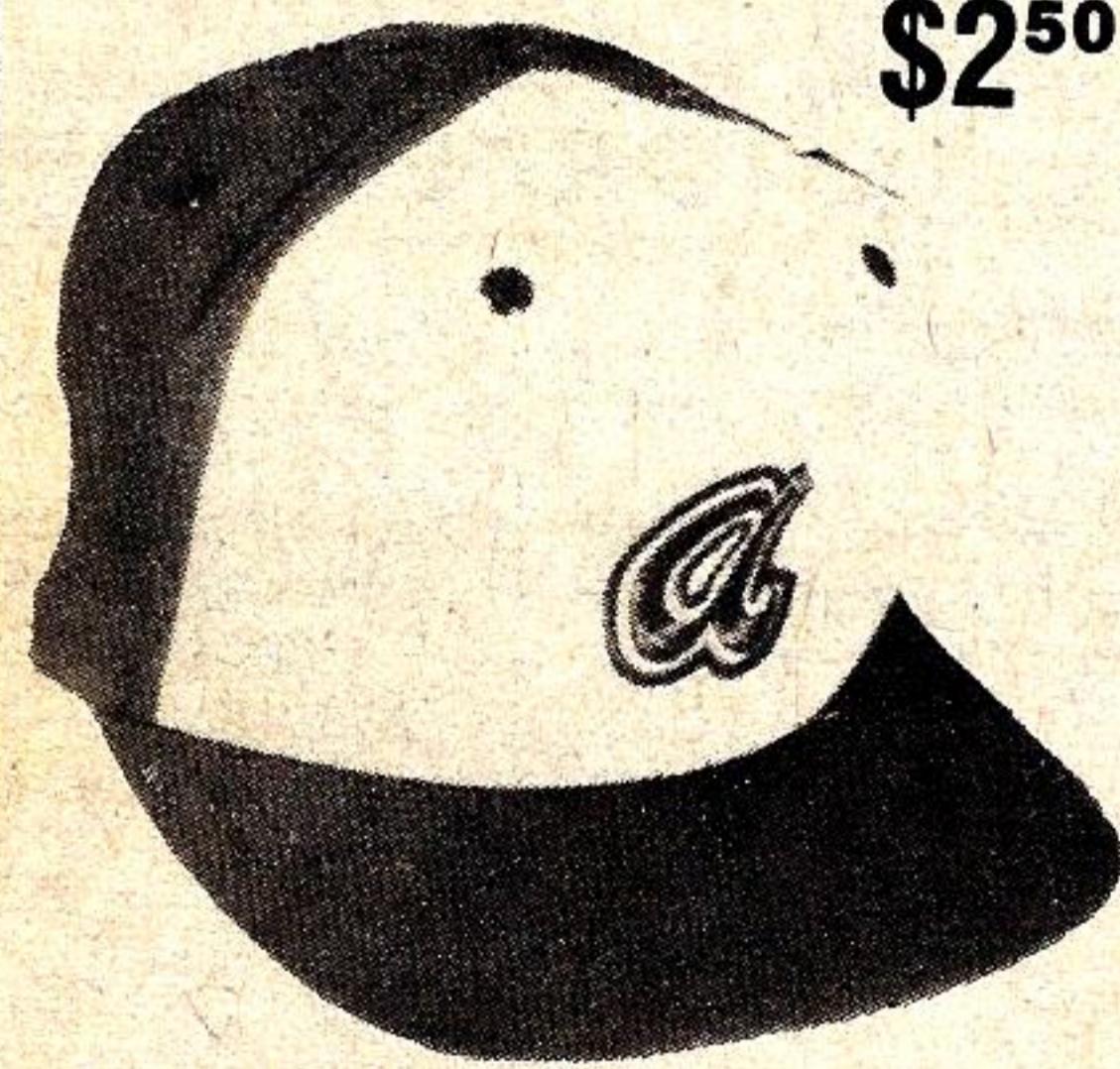
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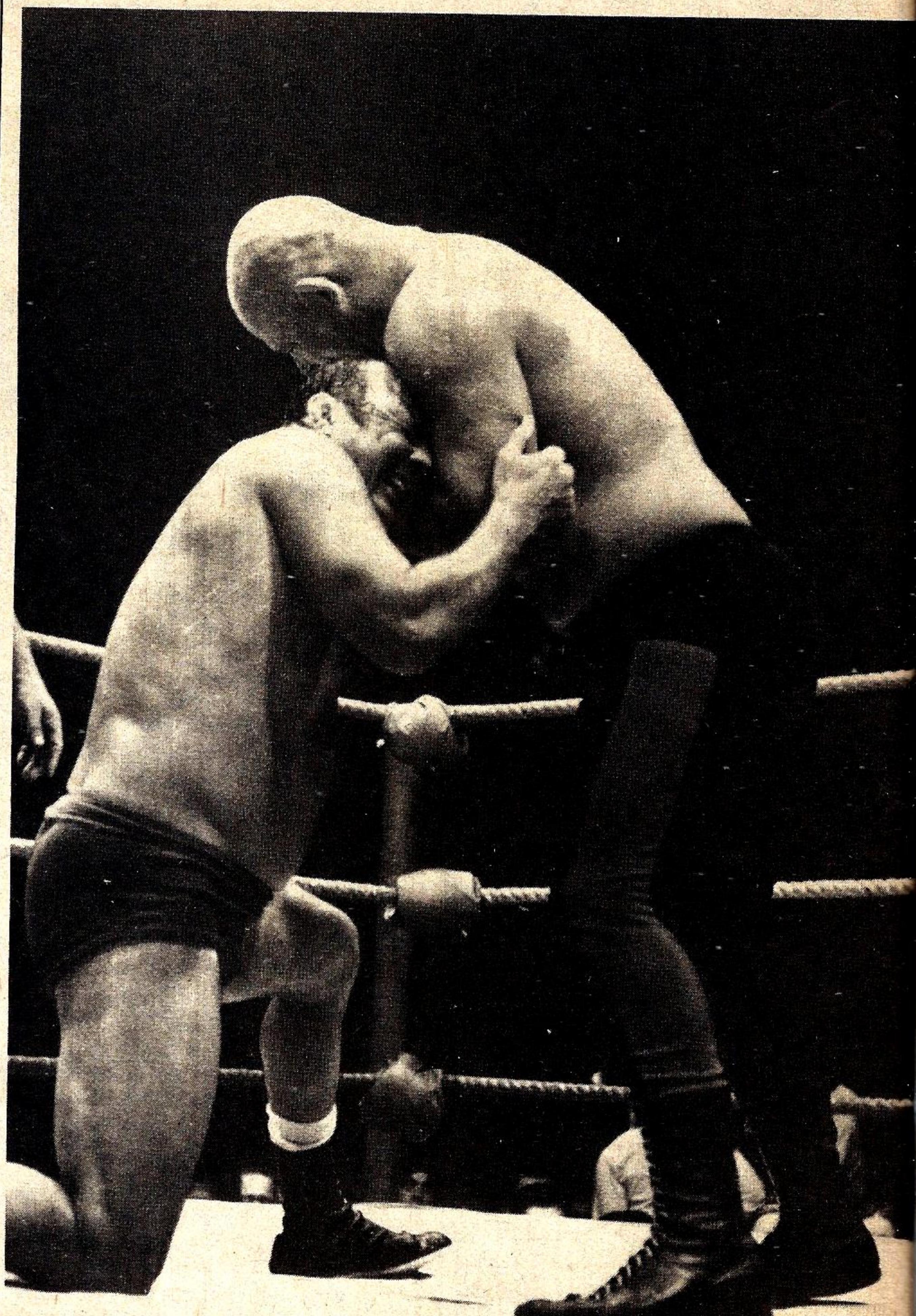
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NICK BOCKWINKLE

(Continued from Page 47)

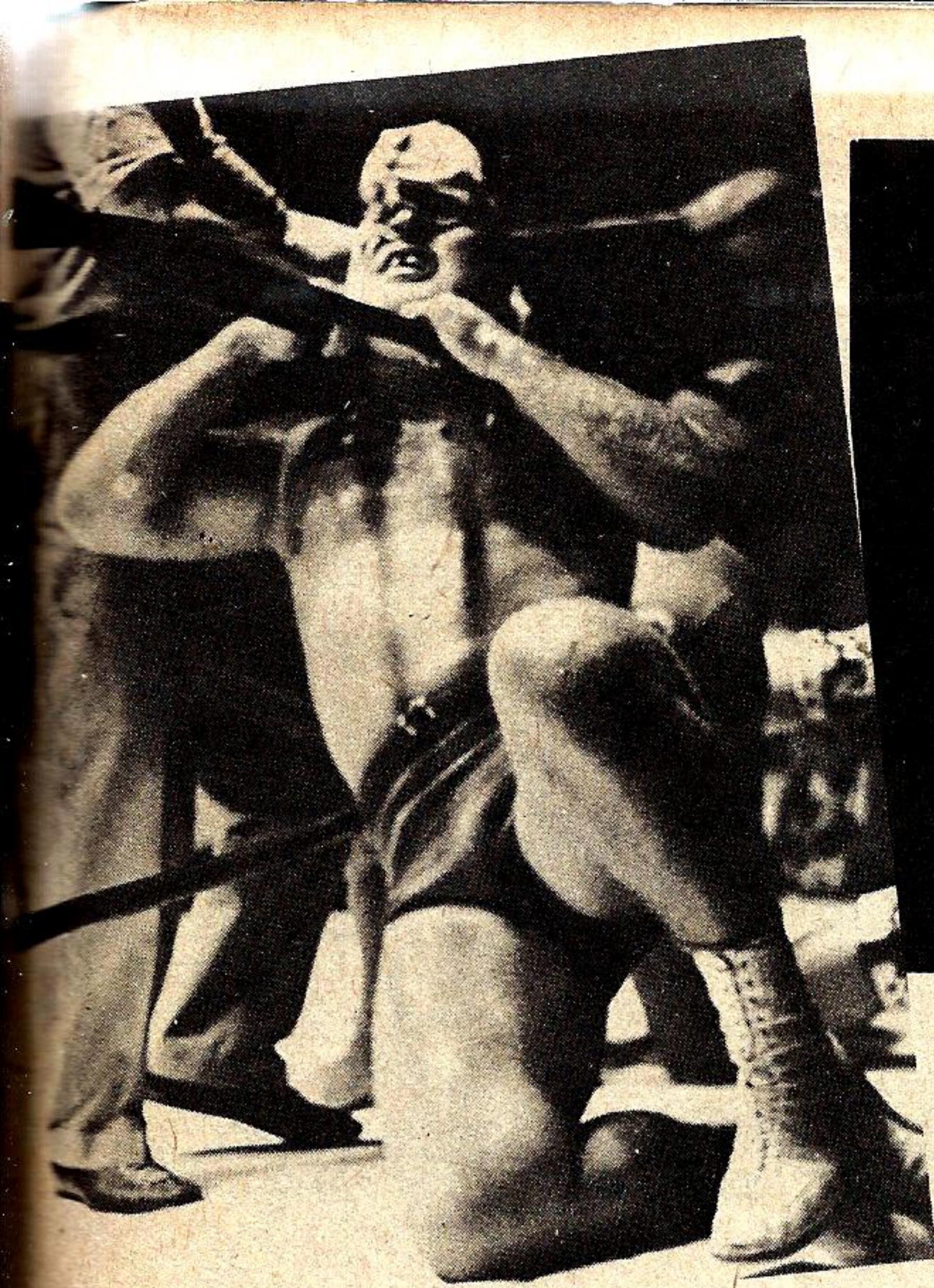


Gagne is brought to his knees as Von Raschke almost breaks the ex-champion's arm. It is moments like this which causes Nick to think he can easily retain his title against any effort by Verne. Is Bockwinkle just bragging or does he really believe his claims?

guys can hang on to a career using only their smarts. Verne doesn't have the brains to outsmart an old dog, much less another wrestler. I could anticipate every move Gagne

made—and so could Von Raschke. Gagne never had a chance.

Verne Gagne has nothing left. His strength is gone, his speed is gone, (Continued on page 64)



(Continued from Page 19)

would give just so much and that was it. Further, the moment he let it go, it would snap back to its original position!

By the time Bob had gotten over his astonishment, The Destroyer had broken free. A moment later, he slammed into Ellis like an express train. Bob sagged under the impact but managed to recover and bulldog his foe to the mat to take the first fall.

Ellis kept tearing away furiously at the hood in the second fall, but he couldn't trap The Destroyer so that he could work unhindered on the mask. Finally, he tied his opponent's head between the two top rope strands and got down to business . . .

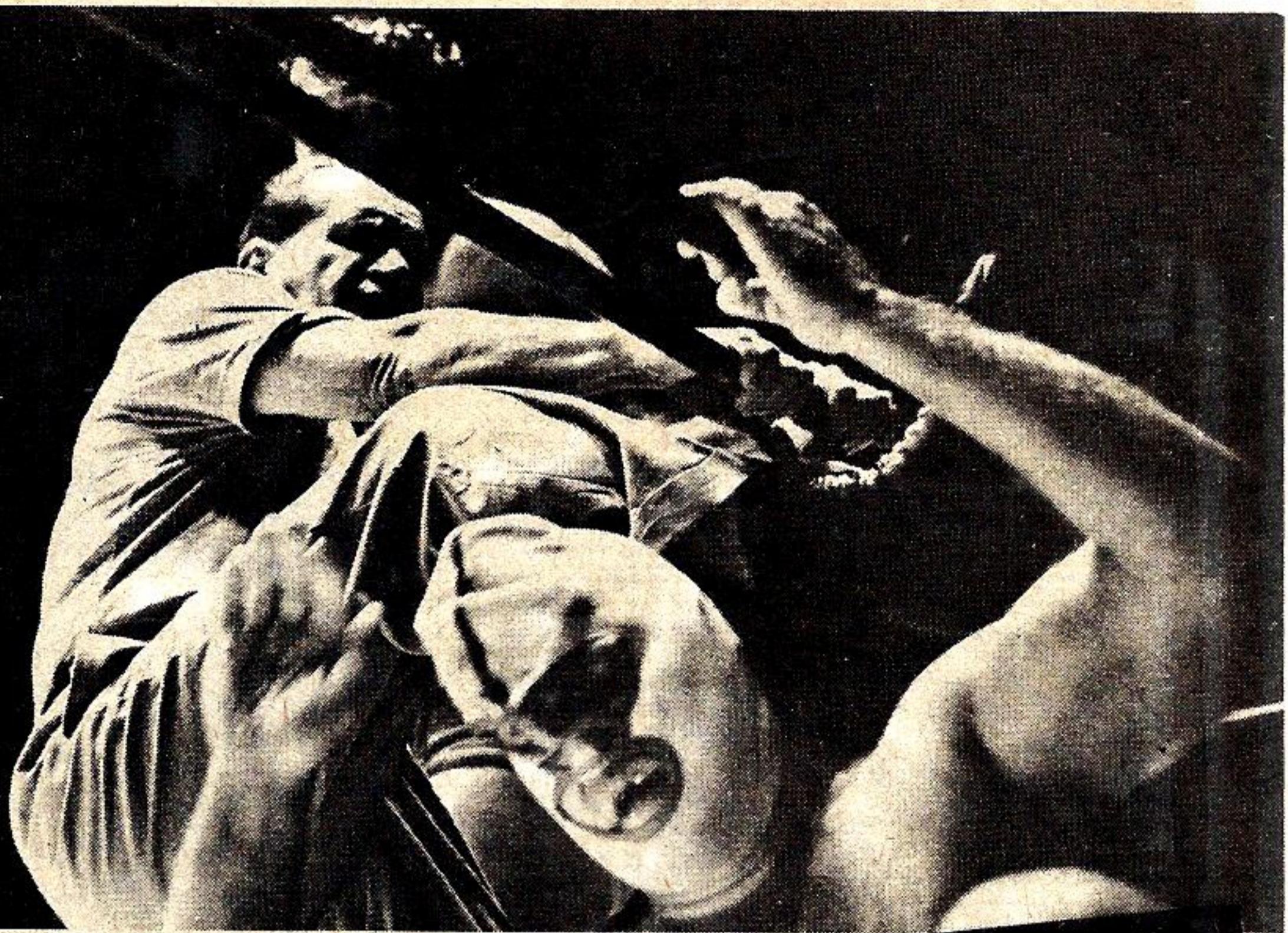
. . . He pulled . . . and pulled . . . but it still wouldn't come off. "It was like trying to stretch a thick piece of rubber," Ellis recalled later. Bob was about to make a supreme effort when the referee interfered and untangled The Destroyer.

The referee, Bobby Coleman, was only doing his job, but Bob was incensed anyway. "Everytime I get that guy where I want him," Ellis protested, "the referee rushes in to rescue him."

The Destroyer, who had been on the defensive most of the time, now began to smash back. He blasted Ellis to the ring apron and came down hard on Bob's left leg. Then he stomped on the leg until Ellis, grimacing with pain, submitted.

After a quick checkup by the referee, Bob gamely hobbled out in the final fall. The Destroyer promptly decked him by kicking the injured leg. Then, bridging it between his knee and the ring rope, he dropped his full weight on it.

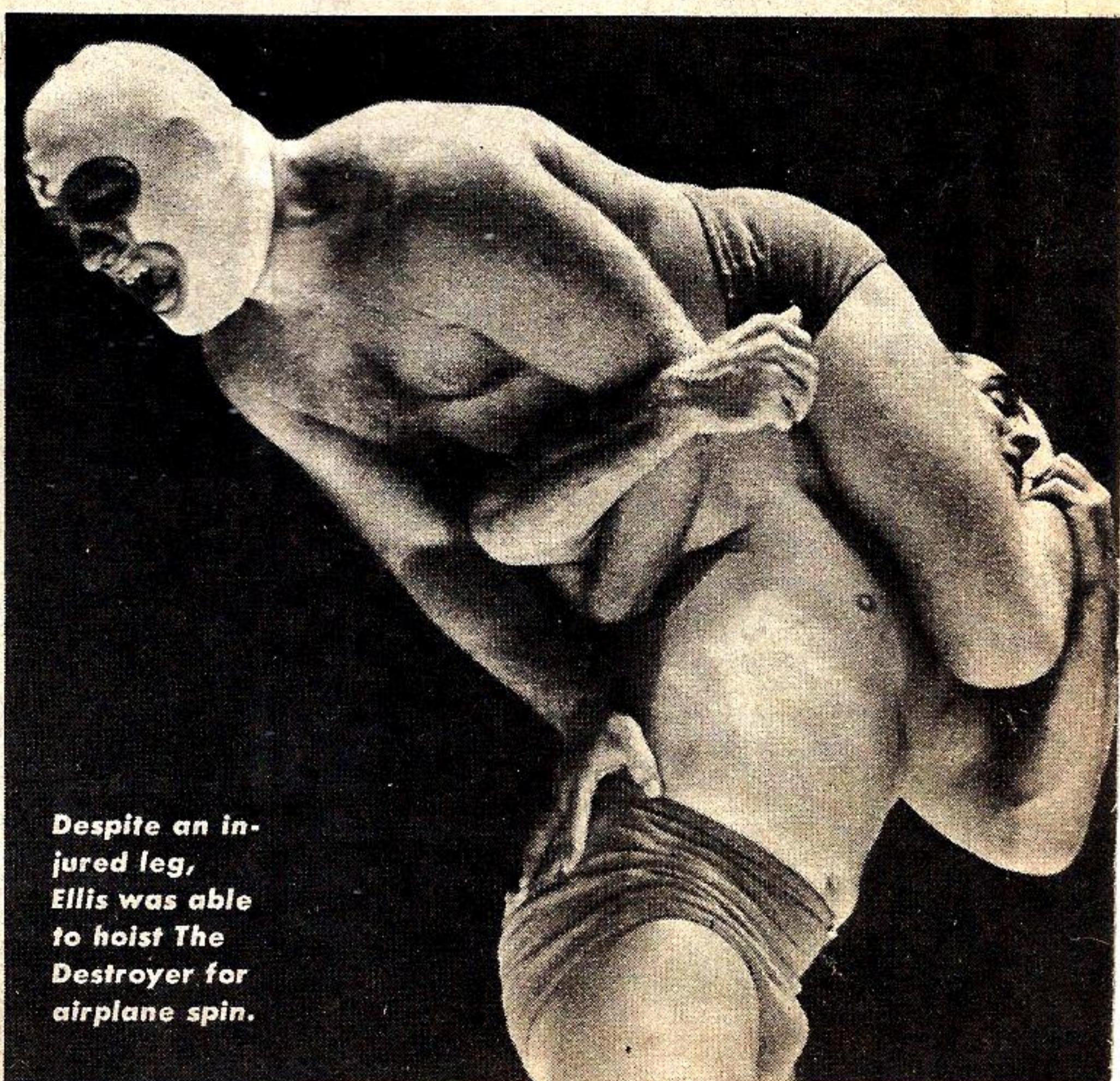
Since both men were on the ropes, the referee warned The Destroyer to desist. But he snarlingly refused and when Ellis' adviser attempted to



Said Ellis: 'Every time I got my opponent in a tight spot, the referee rushed in to rescue him!'

interfere, the masked man leaped out of the ring and took after him. Whereupon he was counted out by the referee.

The big mystery about the mask remained, however, until Bob ran into an old crony of The Destroyer. "I'll tell you why you couldn't get that mask off," he said. "The Destroyer had so much trouble with the cloth ones he used to wear that he got a special one. It's made of the same kind of material they use in those new tires. A hundred men couldn't tear it off!" □



Despite an injured leg, Ellis was able to hoist The Destroyer for airplane spin.

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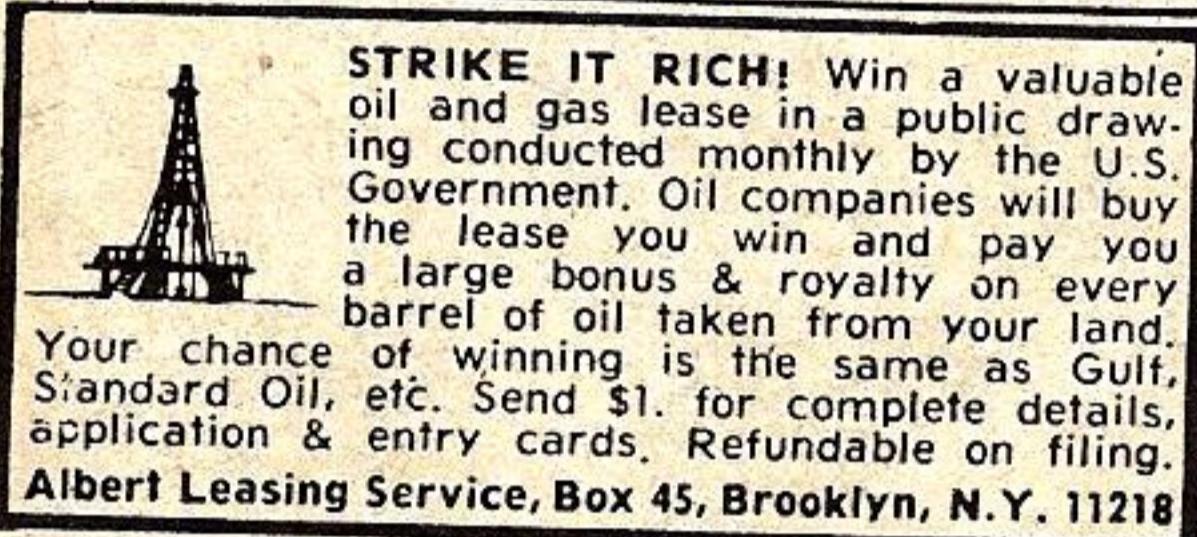
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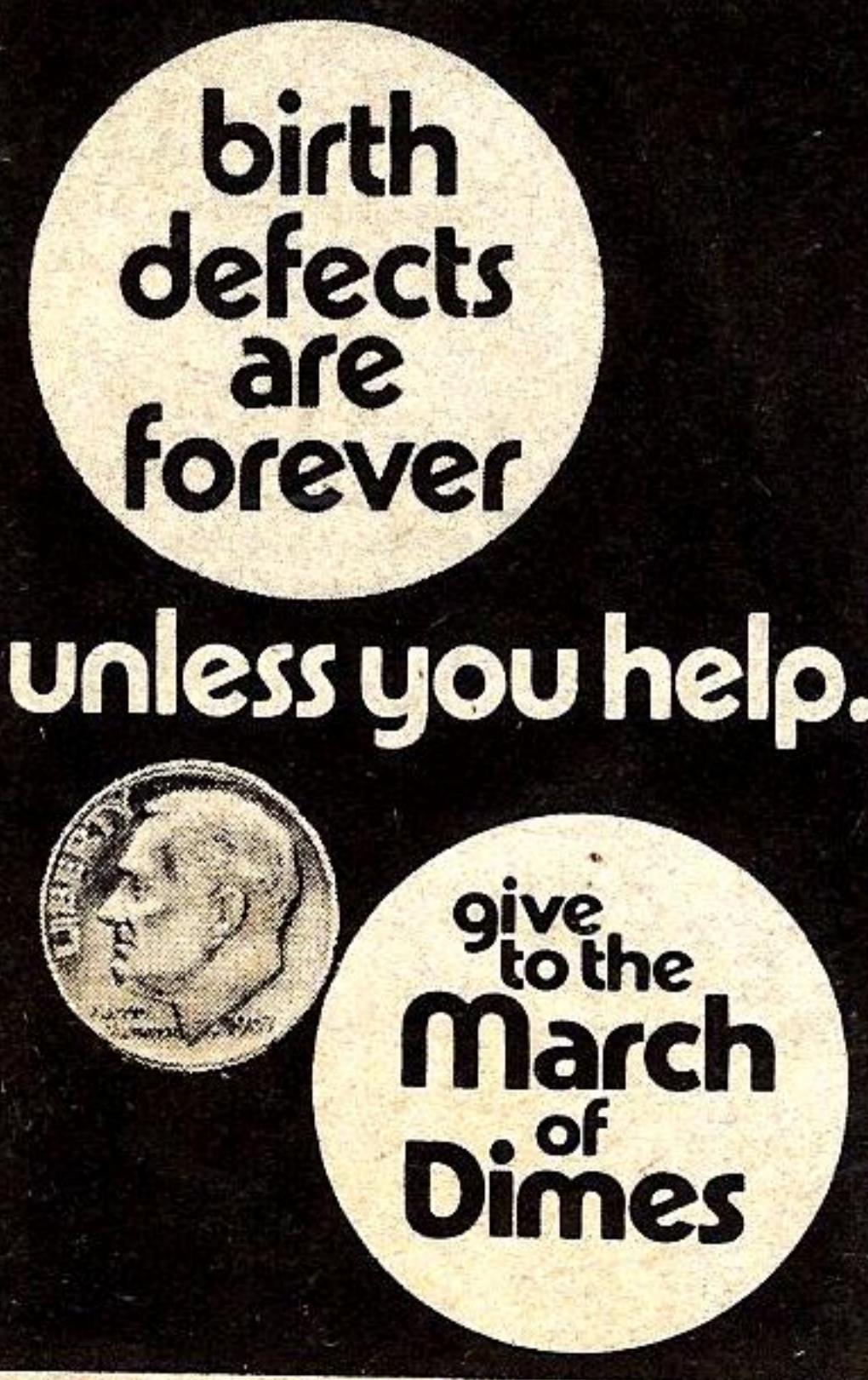
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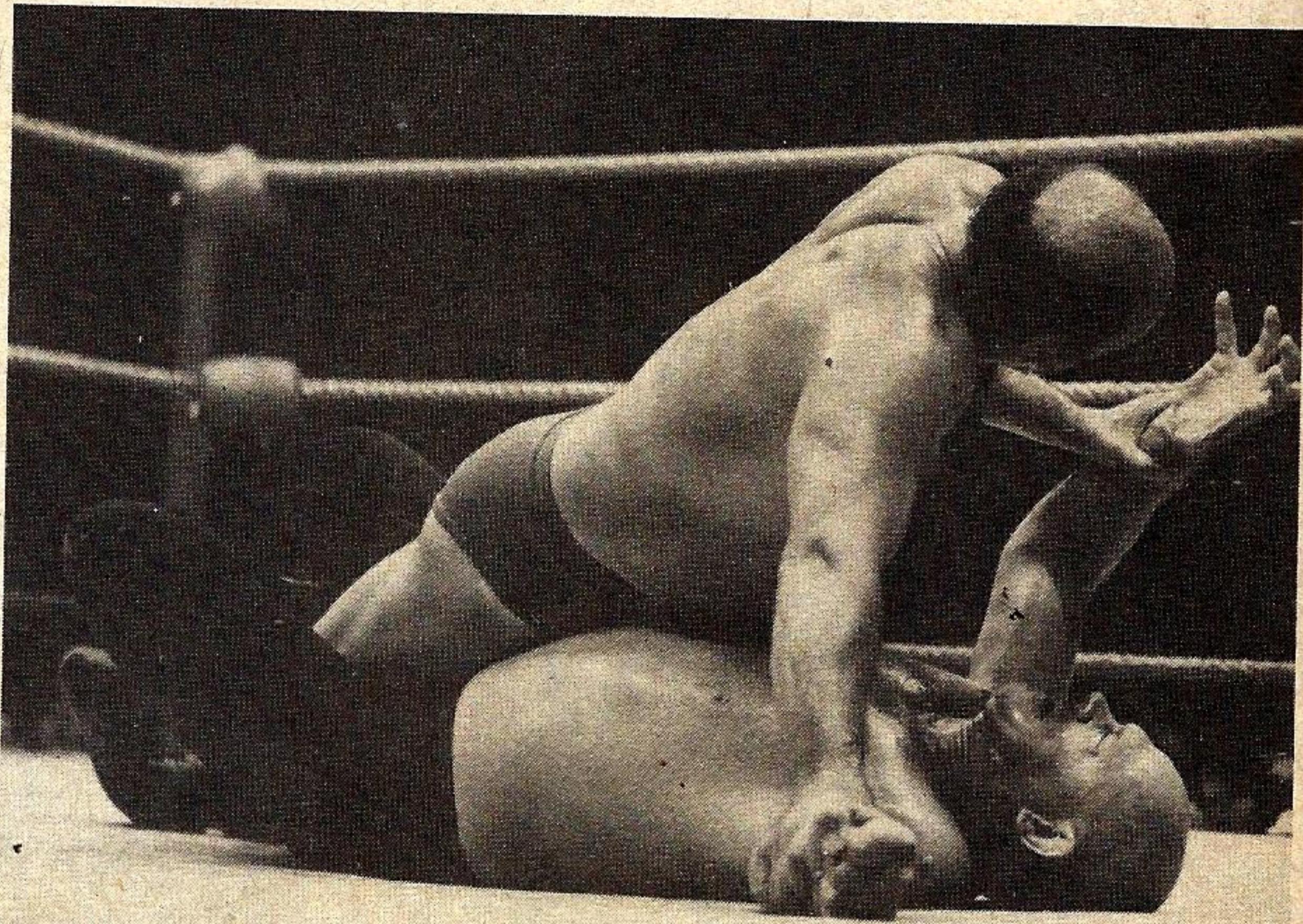
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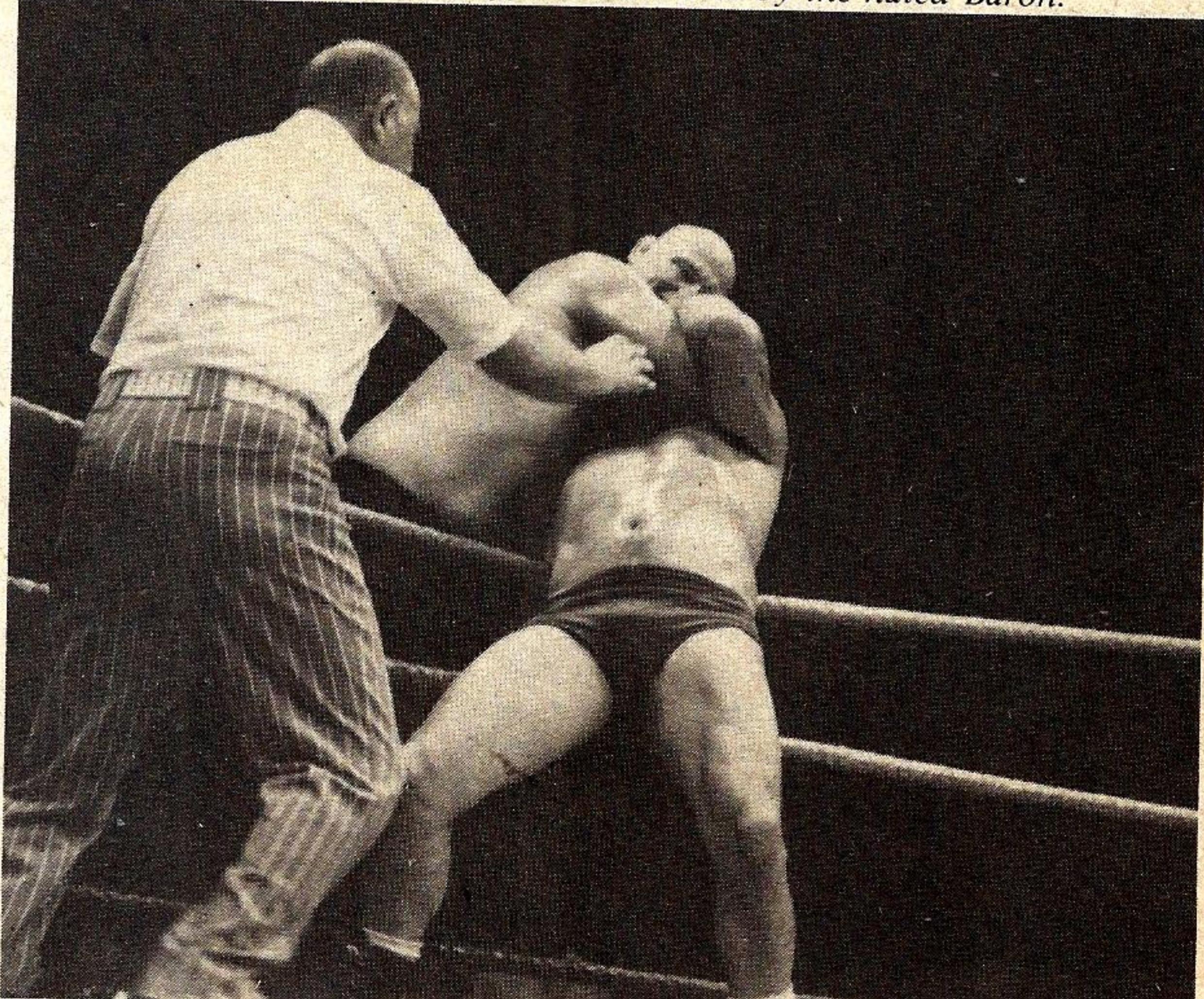
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NICK BOCKWINKLE

(Continued from Page 62)



Above: Two battered warriors struggle for survival; Gagne is close to victory while Von Raschke battles for survival. Von Raschke did escape, but he was much more wary after this and failed to mount a sustained offensive for the remaining minutes of the bout. Below: Von Raschke leans over the ropes to choke Gagne as the referee runs to stop it. This is a typical maneuver by the hated Baron.

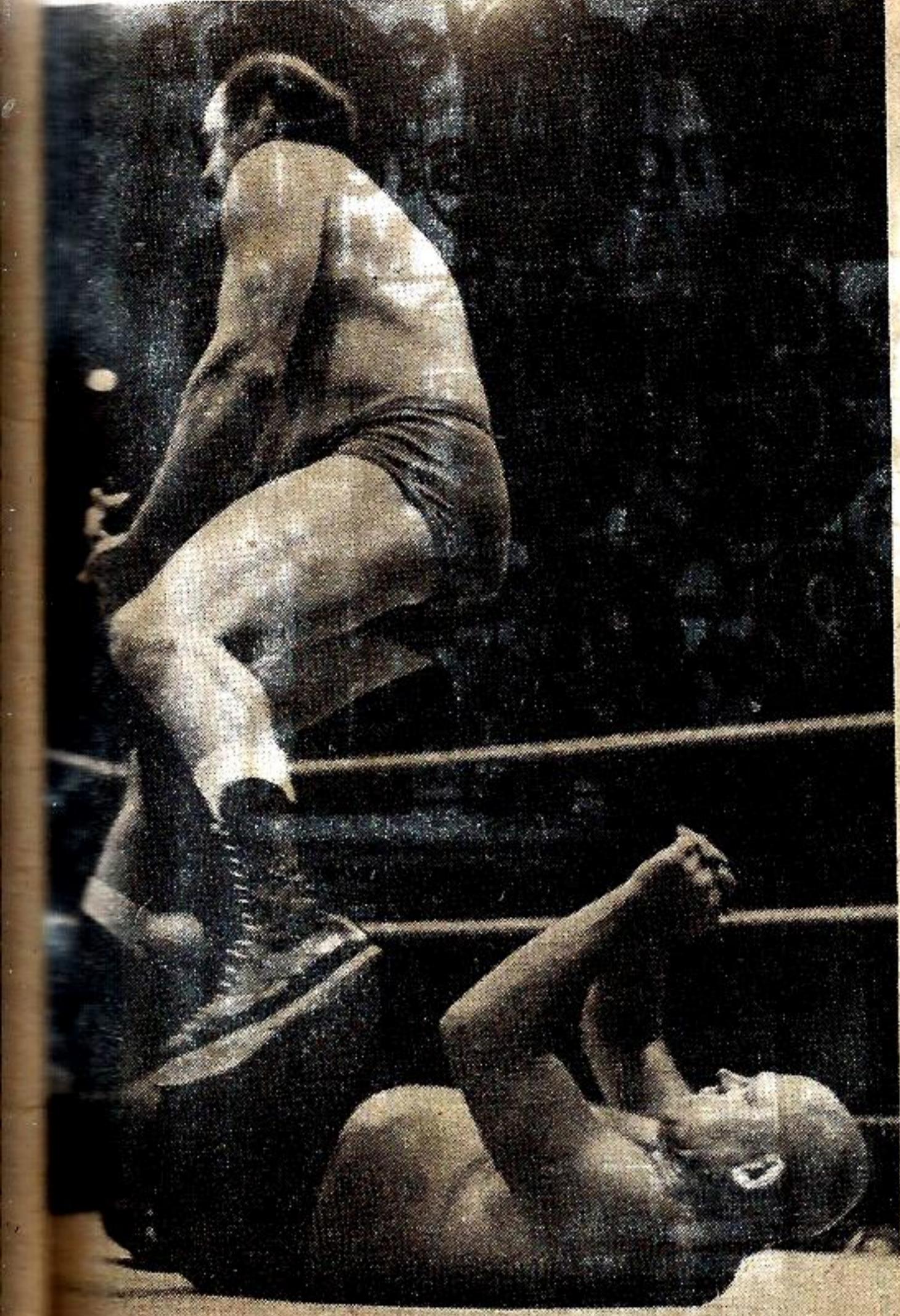


and he never had any brains. To think of him as a threat is ridiculous.

One instance during the match proves my point. By sheer luck and Von Raschke's boredom with the bout, Gagne managed to put Baron

in a spinning toehold. Usually, that's enough to finish off any wrestler. There are few escapes and they're easily prevented.

Well, I almost dropped my pencil when I saw Von Raschke escape



Von Raschke's leg feels as if it's about to be ripped off as Verne executes an exquisite spinning toehold early in the bout seen by Nick Bockwinkle.

using the most basic moves. Even Baron was shocked at the ease of his escape. Preliminary wrestlers fresh out of nursery school could do better than Gagne!

The rest of the match was just like that. Von Raschke got Gagne in the most elementary headlocks. There are about 100 ways for a man to break them effortlessly. There's no risk involved. Gagne couldn't do it. It took him much too long to escape and he risked too much. It was incredible how badly he did.

Verne Gagne is taking too much punishment to continue wrestling. He ought to retire before he gets hurt. Not everyone in this business is as compassionate as Von Raschke. Verne's going to find himself someone who doesn't feel sorry for him and Gagne will be in real trouble. He may even be crippled for life. It wouldn't be hard to do.

I originally went to see Gagne's match with Von Raschke to discover ways I could beat Verne. I thought he was a threat. After the match, I tore up all my notes. I know now I'll never have to worry about Verne Gagne again! □

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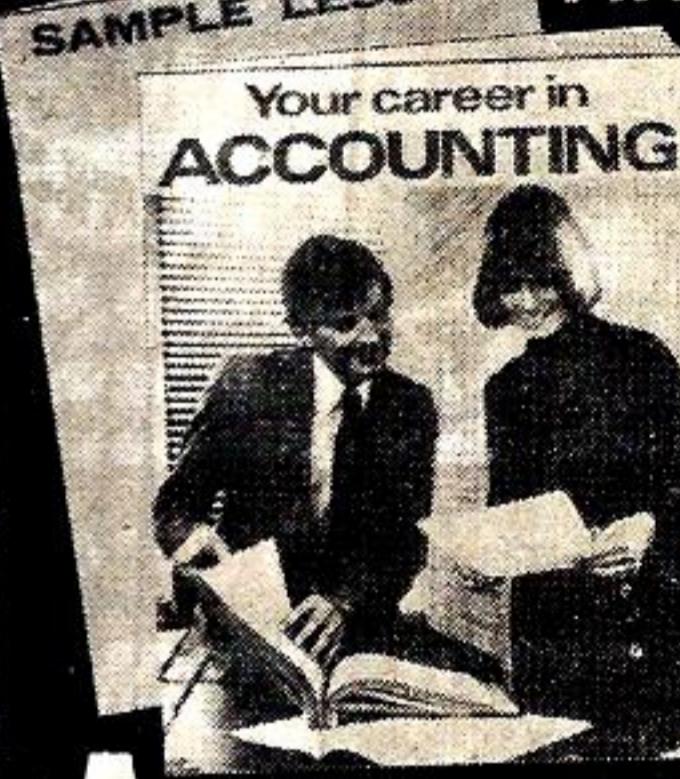
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